

# THE OTHER WOMAN

CANADIAN  
FEMINIST  
VOL.4, NO.5

50¢

FEATURING: WOMEN IN IRAN  
MUSIC FESTIVALS



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THE OTHER WOMAN

DIAN WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL PRESS  
AND FEMINISM PUBLISHED BY CANA-



# 4th ANNUAL GAY CONFERENCE

## LESBIAN AUTONOMY OR COOPTION?

'We, the British Columbia Federation of Women-Rights of Lesbians Subcommittee, believe lesbian oppression and women's oppression to be more aligned than lesbian oppression and gay male oppression. As lesbians we are equally oppressed as women. We feel that the oppression of lesbians is the ultimate extension of women's oppression. Lesbians are oppressed, not for relating to women, but for refusing to relate to men in the approved female roles. The struggle for lesbian rights cannot be separated from the struggle for women's rights.'

'The gay fight for equal status with heterosexuals does nothing to change our patriarchal society, where men have power over women. Until women have equality with men, the fight for equality with heterosexuals merely gives gay men equal status with heterosexual men and reinforces the oppression of women. Our fight is not only for the right to relate to someone of the same sex.'

This Statement from the BCFW Lesbian Subcommittee was read at the 4th Annual Gay Conference in Toronto on the Labour Day weekend. At that time, **The Other Woman** was part of a panel on Gay and Women's Liberation, in which the panel, made up of Marie Robertson, Therese Faubert and Gillean Chase, was seriously divided over the issue of tactics and priorities for lesbian struggle. Marie Robertson is a strong advocate of an autonomous lesbian movement who is also an organizer of the upcoming Lesbian Conference in Ottawa (Thanksgiving weekend). Terry Faubert is a member of the Young Socialists-League for Socialist Action (LSA), a Trotskyist group. She is also a member of the Lesbian Caucus of GATE Toronto. Gillean, on behalf of **The Other Woman**, dealt with the middle class roots of the gay and women's movements (see page 3).



Body Politic

After the panel presentation, it became evident that there were serious differences in approach between women supportive of lesbianism within the context of the struggle for women's rights and those supportive of lesbian autonomy, who are more aligned with gay liberation-civil rights struggles. A third viewpoint is that of Marie Robertson, whose ideal appears to be getting enough women together to fight as an autonomous movement apart from gay liberation for strictly lesbian concerns.

Taken to its natural conclusion, Marie's position appears to discard both alliances with the women's and gay liberation movements over larger issues than lesbian oppression. The gay-straight split in the U.S. women's movement has neither group talking to each other. We do not want to replicate this pattern in the Canadian women's movement.

Up to this point, lesbian and heterosexual feminists have worked together well. For example, during the recent demonstration in support of Nellie's hostel (page 8), lesbians from various women's groups turned up in strong force. Nellie's is a lesbian issue inasmuch as it affects women. We are in agreement with the Lesbian Subcommittee Statement of the BCFW regarding lesbianism in the general context of women's oppression. The BCFW is composed of feminist groups from all political perspectives. The statement could not have been read at the Conference without the general consent of the BCFW. This illustrates our point that feminists and lesbians need not be divided around the issue of sexual orientation, as we can find common ground in our struggle for the liberation of women. The concerns of lesbians should be the concern of all women, straight or gay, just as women's oppression must be the concern of the gay liberation movement. No struggle against sexism can afford a narrow analysis of sex oppression. The State controls our sexuality, gay or straight, for economic purposes. Whatever its professed ideology (socialist, fascist, capitalist), the State controls the human expression of sexuality.

As **The Other Woman's** representative, Gillean sparked a great deal of controversy. Gay liberationists were determined that cultism and superstars are necessary in civil rights struggles and did not appreciate the criticism that there is a danger of losing the issues when movements defend any one individual. (Speaking of cultism: Doug Wilson, whose own civil rights case against the university in Saskatoon has been much publicized, expressed agreement with Gillean after the panel. The remarkable thing about this is that Gillean didn't even recognize him!)

Male sexism in the gay liberation movement also has to be dealt with where many gay males are economically more advantaged and have a more vested interest in perpetuating capitalism. Lesbians and straight women are oppressed under patriarchy and can identify with one another's oppression more than can those who have male patriarchal privilege. Gay men may be an embarrassment to the system, but gay women are a threat. Yet we need to strongly support our struggles for liberation in the gay and women's movements. So it was refreshing to have a man, from the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG), make a motion for support of women's and lesbian liberation. Below is the text of his motion:

*'A motion that NGRC (National Gay Rights Coalition) support the struggle for women's and lesbian liberation. The issues that NGRC and the male gay movement have raised, while including some questions affecting lesbians, have been generally male-oriented. It is time to begin to correct this by supporting the WLM, and by seeing lesbian issues as a priority in the allocation of NGRC resources as decided by NGRC.'*



*'NGRC should support the demands of the women's movement (abortion, child-care, equal pay, the fight against rape) and see lesbian issues (child custody, the struggle against repression directed towards lesbians) as a priority.'*

The result was token support by the Conference and the NGRC of lesbian autonomy without any clear or practical base for action in fighting our common enemy, the institution of heterosexuality. Several outraged lesbians reacted spontaneously to gay male tokenism by demanding that the motion be reopened, and that there be a stronger foundation on which to build solidarity between the gay and women's movement.

A woman from the League for Socialist Action was at the microphone criticizing our reopening of the motion. On the theory that there's 'no red-baiter like an ex-red', a lesbian sister rose to the occasion to yell: 'Sit down. You're not even a lesbian'. Her ex-comrade sat down. This is just one example of the strategy and tactics of the LSA at the conference, who did not even identify themselves, whereas the RMG, who did, were attacked.

Wages Due, the autonomous lesbian group with the Wages for Housework Committee, were conspicuously absent from the Conference because they expected gay males to make only token gestures of support. They did, however, distribute leaflets clarifying their politics on not taking part:

*'There has been a lot of talk about lesbian women not participating in the gay movement. The men accuse us of not being 'political' or into 'political activism' when we avoid their conferences and public functions. This is just one more male trip that overlooks the life and fight of all women.'*

*'Our lives are determined by our desperate lack of time and money as women. Our fight is against every situation of powerlessness and dependence on men that our poverty imposes on us—at home, on our jobs, in the streets and inside the gay movement.'*

All of these issues mentioned above desperately need discussion at the National Lesbian Conference in Ottawa. We hope the Conference will be national but we have our doubts that it will be representative of all lesbians in Canada and Quebec. NGRC expects lesbians to approach gay liberation groups with the resolutions of the Ottawa Conference. We see this as a form of procrastination. The Ottawa Conference appears to be our next forum for clarifying the issue of lesbian autonomy. But, at this point, resolution is highly unlikely.

## WHERE WILL YOU BE ON OCT. 14?

The Canadian Labour Congress, representing some millions of Canadian workers, has called for a National Day of Protest against wage and price controls, to be held on October 14.

If you are a woman who is not a member of a union or if you are a full-time houseworker who is therefore not paid for the work you do, is this National Day of Protest of significance to you?

Yes. **The Other Woman** protests the wage and price controls. They are ineffectual. They are oppressive. But especially to women.



Body Politic

Under wage controls, the equal pay law is not in effect. A woman who is doing the same job as a man, but earning less, cannot be brought up to his level. She can only receive a pay increase of 8 per cent, as regulated by the Anti-Inflation Board.

Many, many women work for no wage at all - in the home. Mothers' Allowance, the one piece of money they can call their own, has been cut back. One consequence is that women in the home must work harder to stretch the budget further.

Major items, for example, housing and energy, are not controlled by AIB.

Social services have been cut drastically - daycare, hospitals, emergency hostels (see the case of Nellie's hostel for women, page 8). Who does this affect most? Women, Native people, those on fixed incomes such as pensioners...all groups with little strength to fight back.

We are angry about the 'psychological' tone of the government campaign. Inflation, so we're told, is caused by our 'expectations'. This takes the burden off the corporations and is an incredible oversimplification of the problem. Furthermore, many Western countries are experiencing the same problem. An individual 'lowering her expectations' is not going to alter the balance of trade.

As women, our problems are many. We are not paid, or underpaid or non-unionized or just generally isolated in jobs we hate. We are also under psychological pressure by bosses who patronize us and harass us sexually.

This is precisely why it's important that we take a stand as women on October 14. **The Other Woman** has called for a coalition of feminists and feminist groups in Toronto to get together for the National Day of Protest. We urge you, too, to organize and strongly protest the wage and price controls on October 14.



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RUMMAGE AND BAKE SALE  
 Sat. 30th, Oct.  
 10 am - 4 pm  
 at  
 Donvale COMMUNITY Centre  
 80 Winchester St.  
 (proceeds to support The Other Woman)  
 Donations are also needed.  
 Phone 595-1873 or 921-2426

BENEFIT HALLOWE'EN DANCE  
 9 pm - 1 am  
 \$2 Admission  
 at Donvale Centre

## gays in cuba delicate subject

The March-April *Other Woman* just arrived, and though I generally find it a very interesting issue, I want to comment on page 3 of the special section. The page is headed *Introducing the Family Code* and my name as byline is in rather large type, giving the impression, I'm afraid, that both reprints on the page were written by me. The first reprint (from *Cuba Review*, Vol. IV, No. 2, 'Women In Transition') is, in fact, by me—and I'm glad to see it reprinted in Canada. The second part of the page, however (reprinted from *Cuba Review*, Vol. V, No. 4, 'The Changing Family Picture'), isn't mine, and not having that issue of *Cuba Review* here on hand, I have no idea who wrote it. The large byline and the lack of a separate byline identifying this second section—on homosexuality—I repeat, makes it look as well as if it had been written by me. It wasn't.

I'm sure you understand that the subject of homosexuality is a very delicate one, especially in Cuba, and I've tried very hard to present the situation with honesty. Cuba's position as well as my own as well as my respect for Cuba and her right to arrive at a liberating and liberated stage in this respect on her own historic terms. I feel very strongly that one thing we can all do around this problem is state the facts as they are, being very careful always to state them accurately—to neither make things better nor worse than they are. And most of all to try to always place them in their true historic and cultural context. There are several assertions in this section on Homosexuality which are simply untrue. I.e., 'In addition, homosexuals were rounded up and were put in lists in newspapers.' As far as I know this has never happened in Cuba. Without trying to make a case for the Cuban attitude towards homosexuality, I feel that making such a statement is really absurd. I challenge anyone to show me a newspaper printed in Cuba throughout the history of the Revolution with a list of names of homosexuals in it!

Another piece of misinformation is in the paragraph following that one. '... little boys in day care centres who might like to play with dolls are discouraged from doing this too much because there is a feeling of protecting society from a recurrence of a great number of homosexuals.' It is true that in Cuban society traditionally this has been a problem: Cuban parents tend to discourage their little boys from playing with dolls and their little girls from playing traditionally 'boy's' games. But this is breaking down and it is precisely in the day-care centres where this breakdown is being oriented and encouraged. In the 'Afterword' to my book on Cuban Women I talk about this, and in fact quote in full an article already several years old from the women's magazine which encourages parents to see this kind of play in both girls and boys as totally normal. The article, and in fact Cuban play orientation on this score, stresses the fact that if little boys don't play with dolls, how will they prepare themselves to take care of their children (in observance of the new Family Code) as adults? And if little girls don't play traditionally boy's games as children, how will they face the contradiction which will arise when—as adults—they are expected to take on the same jobs, defense, etc? It should be noted that this in no way involves a reconsideration of homosexuality. To pretend that it does would be to misrepresent the Cuban Revolution on this score. But I think, nevertheless, that it's important to point out these changes which are taking place.

Margaret Randall  
 Cuba



Body Politic

Collective note: We offer apologies. An assumption was made that a journal such as *Cuba Review* would be read by yourself and that its general politics was approved. We realize that there have been different historical conditions unique to each country.

## on housework and nationalism

I've been receiving *tow* off and on since it first came out about 1972. We used to get an exchange sub. for the 'Journal of Female Liberation' which started in 1968 and stopped about 1972 or 1973. Anyway, when the Houseworker's Handbook came out in spring of 1974, we (Lisa Leghorn and I) tried to send it out to as many papers as possible to get it reviewed and let people know it existed. Though I had been working on the issue of housework since 1969 and did an analysis in one of the *Journals of Female Liberation* called 'Slavery or a Labour of Love', there seemed to be little interest in the movement for the Housework issue. In spite of this lack of interest, I continued to work on the issue because of the importance I attach to it. Well, for all the copies we initially sent out we didn't get one review. We were very disappointed but not too surprised even though at that time the 'HH' was the only booklet on the subject. In the case of *tow* my expectations of a review were even lower because I knew you sometimes have a policy of not reviewing U.S. books in *tow*. I noted this in my letter to *tow* that was sent with the copy of the 'HH' but, nevertheless, we wanted to send one anyway just to give people a chance to see it.

I think the policy of keeping *tow* pertinent to conditions of Canadian women is pretty much justified though there are many things all women have in common. Especially in regard to the U.S., I can see this policy justified. I'm a little bit familiar with the differences between Canada and the U.S. as I lived in Cape Breton growing up and both of my parents were born and raised there. When I first came to the U.S. I found a lot of the people here incredibly arrogant,

aggressive and overpowering in comparison to Canadians.

The policy does have some problems though. I know I've often not sent things to your paper because I was afraid they might be misconstrued as pushing U.S. views and activities. Maybe a solution to this problem could be having 1 or 2 pages of the paper devoted to international news that would take note of what's happening in other countries while the other 20 pages of the paper was reserved for more in-depth analysis of the Canadian situation.

In regard to the 'HH', we pretty quickly learned that it was almost impossible to get word out about it without money or connections (for large mailings, advertisements, distribution costs etc.) After the Power of Women (Wages for Housework Committees) latched onto the issue our problems were compounded because they made it a deliberate policy of suppressing or blacklisting anything on the subject that they didn't have control over or wasn't submissive to their line. This was after they had initially expressed approval of the 'HH' and bought many copies of it.

Seeing that *tow* seemed to be much in sympathy with the W.F.H. approach we wrote off *tow* as having the same authoritarian politics. From your recent issue though, it appears as if *tow* is not as close to the W.F.H. connected groups and is turned off by their politics of manipulation and coercion. I think it's more than just a question of structure though, as the title of your editorial implies. Structure is indicative of political practice and goals and there are groups who disguise their right-wing authoritarian tendencies by leftist rhetoric. I'm sad though that *tow's* interest in the housework issue seems to be declining. I know W.F.H. has been turning off women in droves from the Housework issue in this country and other countries by their reactionary tactics. But it's on *tow* we can't afford to ignore. It will do untold damage to our chance for liberation if we do. To drop an issue because its mishandled by a particular group isn't the solution. W.F.H. is a very small group with few supporters but has disproportionate influence because of its ability to 'wheel and deal' and manipulate people into giving them coverage and credit for things they haven't accomplished. But they certainly aren't the only people working on the issue and hopefully most women concerned with the issue aren't basing their commitment on the antics of W.F.H. But then, there are many important issues in the women's movement and all are worthy of our energies. Lisa and I, in the future, hope to write a critique of the wages for housework movement, its possible repercussions, the role of housework in limiting women's progress here and in other countries, etc. The 'HH' was intended more for a general audience and this analysis will be more directed to movement people.

Best wishes in your work.

Betsy Warrior  
 Cambridge, Mass.

Collective note: *tow* is not about to drop the Wages for Housework issue. Disagreement over Wages for Housework Committee tactics is not the same as wholesale rejection of the idea of paid housework. As to your concern that we will not print pertinent American articles, a check of our back issues should reassure you. American material on third world women and lesbians is often not available from Canadian sources. We also print American news items consistently and recognize that we have some common ground in our struggles against oppression as women. *tow* is concerned that our nationalist policy be a creative rather than a divisive factor in communications between American and Canadian women.

-more letters on page 22



# MIDDLE-CLASS ROOTS

For obvious reasons movements supportive of homosexuality must examine one another's methods of liberation. Examining the methods reveals the underlying theories for dealing with heterosexual oppression. There are fundamental differences between gay liberation and the women's movement, just as there are common weaknesses in both based on class attitudes and class privilege. Civil rights movements in general grew up largely in the context of middle class academia and the protest of middle class intellectuals against one brand of oppression or another. It has therefore invested gay and women's liberation with classist attitudes towards 'individuality' and sex. Not to mention how society and we in general buy into middle class aspirations.

## The whole trip is about acceptance.

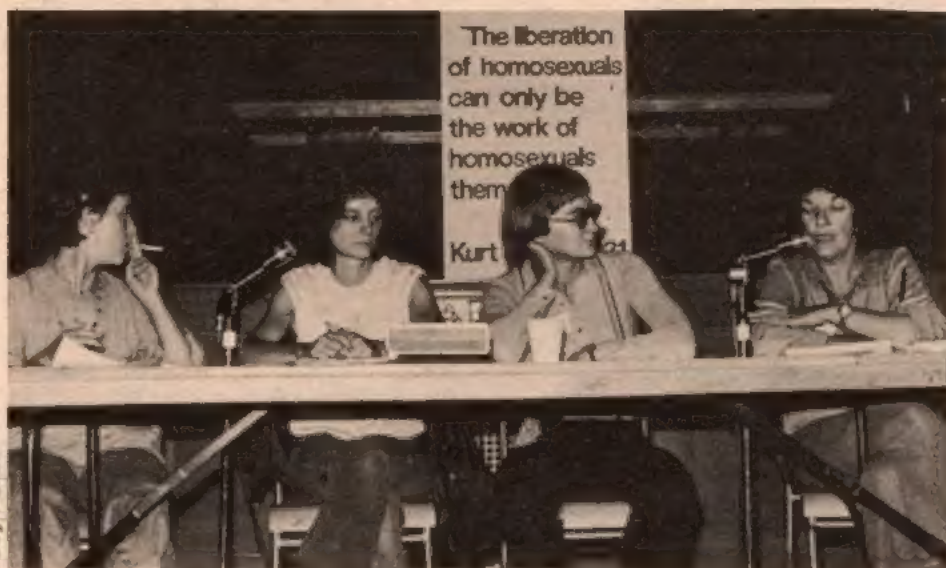
Gay liberation in my understanding feels you rid straight society of its sexual hangups—that you liberalize attitudes towards homosexuality, as part of the 'sexual revolution'. This concept reveals a fundamental middle class background, the unconscious investment in the system: reformist actions to garner civil rights for minorities. Getting accepted as equals by straight society. The whole trip is about acceptance. Women's liberation in the area of sexism has been as tainted by its middle class roots. It has been a movement for 'spiritual' renewal. Changing sex role and ways of sexual relating meant expressing anger against objectification of the body as a consumer item. It meant trying to rid society and oneself of guilt and sexual repression. And it was able to see sexism as economically based, not just part of the 'problem' of being straight or gay.

**"The issue is that no one has any business making a business of whether we're gay or straight."**

Part of the time, however, the women's movement wallows in interpersonal relationships, CR groups and endless 'liberated' sexual experiments which drain off, of course, a huge amount of political energy. Which does nothing to change the over-all structure of oppression in society around class, race and sex discrimination. The women's movement falls over backwards saying the 'personal is political' and thereby has the perfect excuse to examine interpersonal dynamics ad nauseum at the expense of more fundamental political action aimed at the political structure. Women have always made relationships of primary importance. It didn't need a women's movement to accomplish that. So: both gay and women's liberation have been lambasted for making too much ado about 'sexual revolution' without really making the sexual revolution. Which is not going to be done until we stop getting lost in the causes and deal with the issue.

The issue is that no one has any business making a business of whether we're gay or straight. The issue is very probably that human beings are pansexual. Any regulation by the state of human sexual behaviour is obviously based on how useful our sexuality is economically to that state. It is no accident that the family and monogamy are imposed forms of human sexual relating. Reproduction has been useful to produce new workers and monogamy has helped stabilize production by causing workers to stay with jobs. Meanwhile the

## A Collective Presentation to the Gay Conference



Conference panel (left to right)—Marie Robertson, Gilleen Chase, Terry Faubert

state assigns to women the function of loving and caring for workers hence draining off anger at economic oppression. We, in liberation movements, can be similarly bought off. Our personal lovers and friends compensate for the general oppression into sexual and other cages.

Straights are ripped off too. The fantastic anger that would generate if we dealt with the wholesale violence done to human beings by repressive laws and codes regarding sexual behaviour would help tear the system down. Instead we allow ourselves to be labelled—and divided: with some reference to who we fuck or don't fuck as our predominant concept of identity. Labels have their uses in clarifying mental constructs. Labels also create compartments, ghettos, obscure our common oppression under capitalism.

Capitalism propagandizes the whole schtick about the characteristics of being 'male' and 'female' hence defining 'normal' and 'abnormal' behaviour. Church, psychiatry, media and other forms of mass enculturation do the rest. We are taught to be sexually repressed and taught to be sexually active, caught in the dialectic of Christian puritanism and capitalism's profiteering on sexual interest.

Sexual 'liberation' has become an industry capitalizing on hedonism straight or kinky. A form of draining off sexual

tensions through pornographic fantasy and appeal by the sex industry to the pleasure principle. The pursuit of sex then becomes another consumer item, a capital investment. Meanwhile the power structure goes unchallenged. Who you fuck remains a 'side issue', a private 'individual' matter.

## Fighters for causes generate capital

Both our liberation movements must be equally leery of individualist solutions. If polygamy is potentially revolutionary in the sense of breaking down property relating, it is also potentially diversionary. Polygamy can become a hollow form of status, a means of guiltily others around 'repressing' when in fact polygamy remains individualist and apolitical. Media propaganda directed towards sexuality disguises the need for fundamental economic change in the conditions of human survival. It makes of the sexual revolution, so called, nothing more than middle class dilettantism.

Media turns the leaders of the gay and women's movements into consumer items, fads or advocates of kinky ideas. In exploiting theoreticians of the women's movement like Kate Millet, Ti-Grace Atkinson, Jill Johnston and

others, the media created the 'successful' liberationist. This concept feeds the myth of middle class values making success again individualist: the result of personal excellence in competition. Hence, too, the myth of the successful 'career woman' the 'liberated' female who doesn't need a movement to make it in a man's world.

## Being middle class makes us privileged.

The gay liberation movement runs a similar risk when it concentrates media attention on John Damien or other middle class examples of oppressed homosexuals. By singling out an individual, instead of focusing on the issue, we make liberation again personal and individual. Politics becomes another consumer item—fighters for causes generate capital. Causes are exploited as fads and issues get lost in labels. Overexposure creates public boredom, the desire for something new, always something new. Media by regulating us to slots renders us politically impotent.

It is easy to believe in heroes or martyrs and not fight individually for the rights of each person to be sexually autonomous. Creating a gay martyr becomes cultism. It does not deal with how people are oppressed generally, not only middle class gays who are otherwise middle class in their aspirations and hence less economically oppressed than others anyway. Being middle class makes us privileged. Being male in this society is privileged to begin with. Many men in gay liberation have both middle class and sex privilege. It's fashionable in some circles to be a male homosexual. Everyone knows the stereotype of the artistic faggot. Black people have rhythm, gay boys got taste. Keeping sexual nonconformity associated in people's minds with the idiosyncratic kinkiness of artistic 'individuals'. Even casual examination of the *Body Politic* for example reveals this privileged view of culture and the concept of the cultured male homosexual.

Meanwhile we still live in a ghetto. Places for gays provide the illusion that we have space to be. Too small a space, and even smaller if you're female than if you're male.

**"We are only writing new 'love stories' if we do nothing but duplicate the life styles and power dynamics of straight society."**

Women who do not have as much access to capital as do men are oppressed even within the gay ghetto. Gay liberationists must examine their class attitudes and their sexism as males which makes them privileged economically even as they are oppressed sexually. And we must all examine how we ourselves but into middle class privilege and how we are shaped by media propaganda. We are only writing new 'love stories' if we do nothing but duplicate the life styles and power dynamics of straight society. The right to marry and to have joint bank accounts, to own property in common or to raise children in common are all merely reformist measures; which start from the basic assumption that straights have it made and that the best we can imagine is having it as good as straights. Let's make real revolution. Let's aim for changed human relating not for duplicate human relating.

written by gilleen chase





# NEWS FROM AFRICA

## NESTLE'S KILLS BABIES

—What is all the fuss about?

Tinned milk can be an excellent baby food. But it must be mixed with pure or boiled water in exactly the right quantities, cooled to the right temperature, and fed to the baby in a bottle which must be sterilized at least once a day.

All this is no problem to western mothers with hygienic kitchens, clean water, sterilizing tablets, electric kettles and cold running water for cooling.

But for the poverty-stricken African mother, the story is very different. Already imbued with the idea that 'west is best', she is soon persuaded to associate bottle-feeding with modernity, improvement, status. She sees a hoarding-board poster showing fine healthy children holding bottles of baby milk. Or she hears on the radio that such and such a brand of tinned milk will make her baby grow strong and fit. Like any mother she wants to do the best thing for her baby. So she buys the tinned milk and abandons breast-feeding.

But perhaps she cannot read the instructions on the back of the tin. Or she has no method of sterilizing the bottle. Or she has no pure water to mix the powder with, and no facilities to boil and cool water five or six times a day. And then she finds that tinned milk is using up 20% or 30% of her family's weekly budget—so she uses less milk powder in each bottle to 'make it go further'. The result is malnourished infants who become less and less able to digest food properly and who have less and less resistance to disease—which is always threatening in the shape of an unsterilized feeding bottle.

So widespread is this cycle that babies in some African hospitals are in beds marked "Lactogen Syndrome"—after the baby food of that name.

In Freetown, Sierra Leone, a hospital survey showed that 713 out of 717 babies admitted for malnutrition had been bottle-fed. And in the rural areas of Chile, deaths of babies under three months old are three times more numerous among those who have been fed on tinned milk.

These facts are known to the European and American baby food companies like Nestle and Abbott Laboratories, American makers of a milk brand called 'Similac'.

Yet they continue to promote their products on radio and in newspapers and on hoarding-boards with seemingly no regard for the misery they are inflicting on mothers and children.

A typical day in Sierra Leone sees 15 thirty-second advertisements for baby food on the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service. Nestle is the leading advertiser crackling out in broken English: "Now Lactogen a better food cos it don get more protein and iron, all de important things dat go make pikin strong and well".

But the American company Abbott Laboratories is not far behind with its ads for 'Similac'. "It a work wonders so...e go make de pikin walka quick and get all de vitamins which e make pikin grow stronger."

The advertising men on the spot confirm that Kiro (broken English) is used in a deliberate attempt to reach the broadest possible cross-section of the community. Needless to say, neither Nestle nor Abbott Laboratories would be able to use advertising with this kind of message in developed countries—where there are stricter controls on untrue and misleading advertisements.

Radio advertising is backed up by press and poster campaigns, the giving away of free samples to pregnant mothers, and even the employment of

nurses as sales persons. Nestle denies employing nurses but admits to giving away free samples because 'other companies do it and we want to retain our share of the market'.

In isolated cases, the campaign against the baby food companies is beginning to bite. Last August, Nestle cancelled all radio advertisements in Nigeria—three months before the government imposed strict controls on the promotion of tinned baby milk. In Jamaica, public debate has led to new legislation against the worst practices of the baby food companies and in Papua New Guinea the following circular has been sent to all health workers: "A poster has been discovered in a Mount Hagen shop showing a mother, a baby with a feeding bottle, and a tin of Lactogen. The Health Department will not tolerate any advertisements for feeding bottles. All health workers are requested to search every store for advertisements of this kind".

At grass-roots, too, there has been some action to protect mothers and young babies. Nurses and doctors in many hospitals are refusing to allow the companies to advertise inside the hospital and are advising mothers not to use their products. At Segbwena in Sierra Leone, a Nutrition Rehabilitation Unit is feeding malnourished children on locally available foods and showing mothers how to prepare well-balanced and inexpensive meals for their families.

But these are small gains. And there is now no likelihood of stemming the large-scale intrusion of the baby food companies into the poor world. For the companies are far more powerful than is commonly imagined. Nestle itself is the second largest food company in the world, with subsidiaries in 28 developing countries including Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Ivory Coast, Swaziland, Kenya, Zambia,

Nigeria and Sierra Leone, plus six factories in Chile, nine in Mexico, six in Argentina, eleven in Colombia and eleven in Brazil. The turnover of the group as a whole is greater than the Gross National Product of any one of 40 African nations.

All this represents massive investment and employment—and powerful contacts with industry and government—and it is almost impossible for the harassed governments of most developing countries to do anything about it.

The starting shots in the European campaign have already been fired by action groups and churches. In Switzerland, home of the Nestle company, two development action groups published their own version of "The Baby Killer" report. At this moment, they are locked in a fierce legal battle with Nestle and a libel action is to be heard in the Swiss courts in the spring. Sparked off by the Swiss campaign, action groups in France and Germany are coming to lend support.

In Britain, the Baby Food Action Group, a body of people working in aid agencies, churches and volunteer organisations have joined together in their spare time to support the Swiss and mount their own six-month campaign. Members of the Baby Food Action Group see the issue as a specific focus for their concern about the role of multinational companies in the Third World. With the help of sympathetic doctors, medical volunteers, and a growing network of overseas contacts, they are already collecting more information from areas of the poor world where milk promotion is having a deadly effect. They intend to give this evidence maximum publicity, to involve local action groups throughout the country, and to offer ammunition to people in the Third World who are attempting to tackle the baby milk problem at first hand.

Reprinted from the New Internationalist March 1975



## WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA

All black South Africans over the age of 16 must carry a pass at all times and produce it upon demand. In 1968 alone, 7,800,000 South Africans were prosecuted for pass violations. This pass delineates the areas where the holder may live and/or work. The pass book restrictions are far more stringent for women. Black women are customarily considered perpetual minors. They cannot own property in their own right, inherit or act as the guardian of their children. They cannot enter into contracts, sue or be sued, without the aid of their male guardian. Regardless of their age or condition, they are always subject to men.

An unmarried daughter who qualifies for residence in an urban area through her parents loses that right if she marries however, go to live with her husband, as she is prohibited from entering another urban area.

A black woman is also refused a work permit if she is unable to find housing. Women are not legally recognized as tenants, so this is almost impossible. This means that if a woman is widowed, divorced, separated or deserted by her male guardian, she faces immediate eviction. A black woman stated, 'It is a sin for any mother to lose her husband in our urban areas. Some officials demand that the widow must come to their offices a day after the funeral of their husband to discuss the question of the house...The widow is not entitled to the tenancy of the house.'

If a widow qualifies to stay in an area independently of her late husband, she may be given a lodger's permit. However, her children and dependents will be sent away to the bantustans. The South African Government allows periodic visits by migrant labourers to their families, but these visits are often no more than two weeks per year.

August 9 is designated 'Women's Day' in South Africa. On this date in 1957, 20,000 women assembled in Pretoria; they saved and worked together to raise money to hire buses and cars to bring them to the capital. All processions in Pretoria were banned that day, so the women walked in groups of three. That day they sang a song with the refrain, 'Now you have touched the women, you have struck a rock, you have dislodged a boulder, you will be crushed.'

Again this summer, South Africans are protesting and being repressed. School children have been shot down. Finally, in early July the Government removed the order imposing Afrikaans on blacks as the medium of instruction for all their courses. But they still will be taught the hated language. The white man imposes his language and his culture whenever he can: sometimes, he meets resistance.

—by Cad

Reprinted from Off Our Backs  
Info from LNS and Women's Press



## win—Zimbabwe (Rhodesia)

—White women are entering employment as racist businessmen feel the strain of military claims on the work force. Rather than train or hire black workers for middle-level jobs, employers are temporarily hiring white women to run the businesses. 'We've had to bring in the females,' said one manager.



# THEY CONTROL OUR BODIES

## STARVATION OR STERILIZATION

win—**India**—More than 100 people were massacred in Delhi when police opened fire on Moslems marching against the Government's sterilization policies. Moslem homes have been threatened with destruction to make way for office buildings and only those agreeing to sterilization requirements were to be offered new accommodation. Some state governments are blackmailing employees to produce monthly quotas of those sterilized—or have their pay stopped and in the poorer villages, sick peasants attending primary health centres have been sterilized without being told, including unmarried young women.

Ration cards are being withheld in some areas until sterilization has been agreed to and hawkers, beggars and others of the same species have been cleared from the streets by the police, often into labour camps where many are sterilized at gunpoint. Whilst there is no central legislation at present to make sterilization compulsory, India's Health and Family Planning Minister has made it clear that central Government will not veto state legislation provided they are in a position to carry it out effectively.

## PAINFUL PERIODS

### TAMPONS

Rochester, N.Y. and Fort Wayne, Indiana became test markets in February of 1975 for 'Rely', a Procter and Gamble (P&G) tampon containing polyurethane, a known cancer-producing agent. The new product—in a tampon market that grosses \$130 million each year—contains a mixture of wood pulp derivative and polyurethane, which is used in a variety of products from sofa stuffing to insulation. Chips of polyurethane disintegrate when they come in contact with water.

Women in Rochester and Fort Wayne were not informed that they were part of a test market and that 'Rely' is not distributed nationally. Women who bought and used the tampon complained that 'it felt like trying to remove an opened up umbrella', that the tampon fell apart, causing pain and nausea, and that it caused vaginal itching and burning.

The company maintains that polyurethane is safe, but will replace it with cellulose because it fears the plastic ingredient will negatively affect sales.

A Food and Drug Administration (FDA) compliance officer, Kurt Hirschman, said in November that it appeared that Procter and Gamble had not sufficiently tested 'Rely' before releasing it to the two test markets. There are no government standard for the tampons, so the agency does not pre-test for their safety.

—Info from New Women's Times, Rochester

## RAPISTS HAVE GOOD INTENTIONS

**ENGLAND**—On February 13, the day he delayed the battered women's bill, Rees-Davis also held forth on rape:

*It would be wholly wrong if men were found guilty of it when they did not have a guilty mind.*

*'Take the case of a British Army sergeant who got drunk in the sergeant's mess and ended up raping the wife of the corporal living next door, under the impression that it was his own wife.'*

(Reprinted from Spare Rib)

## FAMILY PLANNING IN VIETNAM

In spite of heavy war losses, Vietnam's present population stands at 40 million—twice what it was 30 years ago. In South Vietnam, which has a population of 19 million, the need for urgent action is recognized, but has been delayed by lack of facilities. The state has officially adopted a policy which would bring down the population growth rate from 3.5 per cent to 2 per cent. In concrete terms, this would mean encouraging people to have 3 children instead of the average 5.8. However, an active campaign has yet to be launched, since medical priority is being given to a costly immunisation programme. Abortion does not figure as a contraceptive measure although declared legal, there are no facilities available. On the other hand, North Vietnam fares better, with its 6,000 communes, each running a health station. Contraceptives and advice are available, though there is still understandable resistance from older women, who look to their children for support in old age. Younger women are more enthusiastic, most of them choosing some form of IUD (We don't know how free their choice is, and can only surmise that the insertion of an IUD is much cheaper than, for example, a year's supply of pills). In some villages, as many as 40 per cent of women of child-bearing age are using an IUD. Already the birth rate is declining. (from Women's Report, Britain)

## NEWS BRIEFS

### win—Israeli-Occupied West Bank

Expectations that women, voting for the first time in this region, would exert a reactionary influence on the results have been proven unfounded. Casting their ballots at segregated polling places, the high percentage of women voters supported candidates dedicated to the struggles for liberation. Reactions to women's suffrage ranged from support for women candidates running for office to a few instances of flat refusal to allow women to vote or run for office. The atmosphere at the women's polling places was festive; the more than 34,000 women who came indicated that they were in favour of public roles in some degree.

win—**Wisconsin**—Ruby Lee Jones, a black mother, won a 3-year battle against the city of Milwaukee for decent housing. The city was ordered to find a three-bed room house for the family with a maximum rent of \$110 a month by June 1; if it does not do it by that date it must make a cash settlement. The court also ordered that the family, which is now residing in a city-owned dwelling with some 30 violations the city has refused to correct, stop paying rent until they are relocated. Ms. Jones said recently, 'I had never been to court before. I was on the shaky side. I didn't know if it was right to bring the city to court.' (N.Y.) Guardian)

win—**Michigan**—After only 10 minutes of deliberation, a jury acquitted a woman who had stabbed her husband fatally when he tried to rape her. The couple had been separated for a year after a history of violent abuse by the husband. The judge refused to rule on the constitutionality of the sexual conduct laws which impose submission of wives to a husband's sexual demands, but the decision is nonetheless significant.



## SWISS WOMEN'S CENTRE

### REAPPROPRIATION IN GENEVA

*it's just a day, like any other day  
it's just a time, like any other time  
but now the doors have opened themselves  
no more struggle, no more pain.  
and there is joy, joy warmth and love  
and there is freedom among us women  
we talk and laugh, we cry and love  
we are together, women in love.  
we took a house, we made it ours  
we filled it up with colors and flowers  
and now we work, we meet and fight  
we took a house, we have a home.*

This poem was written by a lesbian from Geneva, Switzerland as a celebration for the first of May.

On May Day, she, together with 60 other women from the Geneva women's liberation movement occupied a vacant coffeehouse in an old, working class part of the city, and transformed it into the Women's Centre.

'Les Grottes' is a neighbourhood which has been condemned to destruction by the city-planners: the highway belts will one day, soon, run through that area. Therefore, in the last couple of years, landlords have been allowed to keep whole buildings empty and decaying, or rent them to poor people and seasonal workers (mainly Italians and Spanish) who can easily be kicked out when the time comes for construction. Community groups are already organizing around this issue.

There used to be a Women's Centre in

Geneva. But, two years ago, the building which housed it—as well as the Chile Solidarity Committee—burned down. (!!!) Ever since October 1975, the WLM has been demanding from the city administration another low-rent space, the usual bureaucratic delay tactics occurred. The women even went to the trouble of gathering and sending a petition (remember that Switzerland is supposed to be a Confederation of free states and individuals where a petition is the 'Voice of the People').

So, on May 1st, fed up, a group of militant women occupied a coffeehouse whose walls were covered with roses, made it into a womanspace and celebrated with a joyous street fair.

Two years without a common public space where women can meet, talk, organize among themselves. Two years of groups meeting in apartments, of sporadic 'passive' actions such as conferences, fairs and rallies. The women in the WLM felt an increasing need for that space and anger, too, at being denied it. They wanted a Centre where actions could be organized around public issues affecting the lives of women, such as the 'economic crisis' with its discriminatory lay-offs, housing, abortion laws, wages for housework and the new Medicaid regulations which refused reimbursement for gynecological examinations. Already, in the last 6 months, the WLM had interrupted the macho discussions in a Right-to-Life conference by throwing around shit-covered baby diapers and briefly occupied the headquarters of the Christian-Democrat Party which has been pushing for restrictive abortion laws.

The city administration, headed by a reactionary woman mayor—alas!—has unsuccessfully tried to oust the women first by threats and then by a proposal for a space which won't be available until late in 1977. They haven't (yet) used police violence but an official complaint has been filed against Jane Doe for illegal squatting.

Meanwhile, the Women's Centre is entering its third month of existence. The space is being well used to work and play. The lesbian group meets there regularly as well as the Wages Against Housework and the women involved in self-help. There is also an emerging music group and a woman's dance from time to time.

By Grazia—with info from l'insoumise and the Journal de l'occupation, Geneva, Switzerland.

(Reprinted from Off Our Backs)

win—**Egypt**—Proposals for women students to wear a special dress that would cover their heads, arms and legs are being studied at Cairo's Al Azhar University. Most of the women students are not eager to adopt it. Fatima Ibrahim, a medical student, pointed out, 'We belong to a society where women wear Western dress. We are not going to go against this. I would look awkward all wrapped up in conservative dress.' Another student, Nawal Hassan said, 'The sheikh's suggestions are silly. They argue that girls wearing skirts that show their legs embarrass them. Well, they should not look at our legs and concentrate on their lectures.' Considered one of the most liberal of the Arab states, Egypt has experienced periodic struggles about clothing. After street demonstrations by women during one such debate, the veil was abandoned in 1901.

win—**Britain and the Third World**—'Who Needs the Drug Companies' by four women of the Haselmere Group is a carefully documented study of the drug business, particularly as it affects the Third World and within that context, its impact on women as unknowing test-objects or a manipulated consumers. Available for 50 pence from Third World Publications, 138 Stratford Road, Birmingham B11 1AG.

win—**USA**—533 civil suits are pending against A.H. Robins Co. as of late April, charging death and injuries caused by the company's Dalkon Shield IUD. Another 117 suits have been settled, another 225 have been filed, and 109 claims involving \$394,499 have been settled before suits evolved. There have been at least 15 fatal and 247 non-fatal infected miscarriages attributed to the Dalkon Shield. The pending cases seek \$480 million in damages from the company whose 1974 profits totalled nearly \$27 million. But Robins president, Wm. Zimmer, reassured those at the company's annual meeting in April that 'while the ultimate cost to the company cannot be accurately predicted, I can say I am firmly convinced that the progress of the company will not be materially affected by the matter.'

win—**Brazil**—Movimento Magazine, which had planned an edition on women's work, has decided not to go ahead after government censors banned 95 per cent of the material prepared. The issue was intended to depict life in Brazil from the perspective of the 'most suffering people'; it would have shown that 82 per cent of women in employment are in service jobs rather than in production, and that many of the jobs are low-waged, low-status jobs that could be socialized.



## "GIRLS" IN THE OLYMPICS

### NATIONAL LESBIAN CONFERENCE

There is a Conference organized by L.O.O.N. (Lesbians of Ottawa Now) being held in Ottawa on October 9th to 11th (Thanksgiving weekend). Registration is on a first come basis at \$5.00 per person. Some workshops are on: lesbian autonomy, culture, feminism, coming out, older lesbians, etc. See our next issue for full report.

### U.B.C. WOMEN'S OFFICE EVICTED

As of July 16th, 1976, the Women's Office has been evicted from the Student Union Building, Room 230, U.B.C.

The reason that was given for this eviction by the Student Administration Committee was that the space occupied by the Women's Office was 'untenably excessive (sic) for a non-subsidiary of the Alma Mater Society'. The issue of space allocation was not discussed at the meeting which was attended by representatives of the Women's Office wherein the motion of eviction was passed.

Over the past six years the Women's Office has been frequently hassled and undermined by some members of the A.M.S. student executive. There is a basic conflict between running a 'Women's Centre', remaining sensitive to what is in the best interests of women, and, continuing to attempt to conform and work within a bureaucratic structure that is made by and organized with the interests of those in power (i.e., a patriarchal society).

In spite of the severe problems of being constantly harassed by male student executives, sporadic and insufficient funding, and working within a university that has never acknowledged or supported the very important work achieved by the many women who have mostly donated their ideas and labour to the Women's Office of U.B.C., we have managed to operate in what we consider to be the interests of women. Some of the many achievements by members of the Women's Office Collective include the following:

1. A non-credit Women's Studies Course.
2. The 'Women's Action Group'.
3. 'The Women's Research Collective'.
4. The Resource Library.
5. A 'Women's Music Library'.
6. An 'Audio Tape Library'.
7. Our last achievement is the 'Women in Focus' audio-visual library that we have established over the last two years.

These are the major areas that we have worked in and so that these various resources can continue to be used by women we have moved them into the community. Our new address is No. 4, 45 Kingsway, Vancouver, B.C. (872-2250). Come up and see us some time. We are fortunate to be able to share an office with the Women's Research Centre of the B.C. Women's Studies Association.

During the last year the Women's Office was not funded at all. We have approached many agencies for funding, any kind of funding, but like so many women's groups we have found that there is a little money for 'innovative' projects but very little to sustain a long term programme. Grace McCarthy's office of the Provincial Secretary has not as yet acknowledged our funding proposal sent to her in February 1976. This kind of treatment makes it very clear to women what they can expect from this government.

We hope that you can help us maintain our office. We need your emotional and economic support. Please feel free to make use of the resources listed above, and let us have any new ideas that you may have for future programmes for our television series. We would also be happy to talk to people on the problems and joys of working in the media.

CBC finally admitted not only to feminists but the rest of the country that its attitude toward women is patronizing and demeaning. Women in Ottawa, Toronto, Saskatoon, Winnipeg and Vancouver demonstrated outside CBC buildings on July 22 in protest against a midnight Olympic wrap-up coverage Monday, July 19th. On that programme, Gary Lautens presented the Glutaeus Maximus awards which consisted of a film clip featuring the breasts of women on the Olympic site. At the end of the flick they presented the gold medal to the most well-endowed cleavage. The whole presentation which was originally scheduled as a regular event was insulting and degrading. It only served to prove that women competitors are not taken seriously as athletes.

B.J. Danylchuk explained: 'It was the capper, the one that sent us out on the streets so to speak. It's bad enough the reporters more often than not refer to our women athletes as 'girls' or 'young ladies' and the members of the men's teams as men.'

Even though the apology was received, CBC has done little to clean up the rest of its act. On July 28th, women continued to express their outrage through the means of a phone-in to CBC

offices from 9 am to 12 noon. These calls were nation-wide as well as local. The calls were directed to the complaints department and the president of CBC, Al Johnson. The woman in the complaints department was very cordial and recorded all complaints. Getting through to the president was considerably more difficult. Some callers were automatically channelled to the complaints department while others were hassled and told they were a nuisance. Other callers were referred to a 'special assistant' who was male and very defensive. His biggest worry was knowing when a girl turns into a woman! THIS SORT OF ATTITUDE ONLY INCITES MORE DISSATISFACTION AND GREATER IMPETUS TO CONTINUE PROTESTING. However, on Thursday, July 29th a directive was issued to the sports broadcasters telling them to refer to female athletes as women and not as 'girls'. As Bea Baker, organizer of the phone-in, has stated: 'To call female athletes girls is to deny them status as mature persons.'

Congratulations to those who participated in the demonstrations. Hopefully the apologies and directives prove to be more than token.

(Reprinted from The Ottawa Women's Centre Newsletter)



"Toronto's Jogging Society" joins the protest.

A.C.C.T. (Abortion and Contraception Committee of Toronto) held a conference on contraception in Toronto at OISE (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education) on September 17. The three main areas it dealt with were: research, counselling, and the myth of population control. A.C.C.T. announced plans for a demonstration at Queen's Park to be held on the 16th of October at noon. This is to demand more government money for better birth control services and for independent research.

If you want to know more about A.C.C.T. and the demonstration, contact the Birth Control and V.D. Clinic, 2828 Bathurst St., Suite 501 or phone 789-4541. For full report on the conference and the demonstration, see our next issue.

More than 11,000 steelworkers of Stelco's Hilton Works in Hamilton have elected Norma Berti to be financial secretary for Local 1005. Ms. Berti, a tin mill inspector employed at Stelco since 1960, is the only woman on the union executive. She now holds the most important post held by any woman in the United Steelworkers' Union in Canada. According to Norma Berti, there were 200 women at Stelco when she started there 16 years ago. Today, that number has dwindled to 40. She believes in equal rights for women/m not saying women should be forced to go out to work, but if they want to or have to work, they should have the same chance at jobs as men. (Ontario Women's Bureau Newsletter)

### BENEFIT FOR OTTAWA WOMEN'S CENTRE

The Ottawa Women's Centre will hold a fund-raising benefit on October 27, 1976 at the High School of Commerce at 8 p.m. The concert will feature CT and April, Angele Arsenault, Ellen McIlwaine.

While the primary objective of the benefit is to raise money for the Women's Centre, the event will provide the opportunity for women to develop new skills in organizing and working in a collective way. The organizing group comprises women only and all decisions are collective ones. Efforts are being made to involve women in all aspects of the concert, from poster design to technical assistance. The event will also serve to promote women's music by bringing to the community newcomers CT and April as well as the more well-known Angele Arsenault and Ellen McIlwaine.

For tickets, send \$4.50 each to the Ottawa Women's Centre, 821 Somerset St., Ottawa, Ontario.

### ATTENTION POETS, ARTISTS, DREAMERS

We are compiling a newsletter of

NIGHTMARES  
SWEET AND SOUR DREAMS  
PROPHECIES  
VISIONS  
WAKING DREAMS  
INEXPLICABLE COINCIDENCES  
AS EXPERIENCED AND TOLD BY WOMEN

We want accounts of individual dreams and dream series, and poems or stories based on dreaming. Contributors will be repaid in copies of the dreamletter.

Send dream materials to:

Keotanchur  
4265a rue Clark  
Montreal, Quebec

### NATIVE WOMEN MEET PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

Representatives of native women in Canada appeared before the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development May 25, 1976. The event is not without historical significance. It is the first time in Canadian history that native women have been invited separately to give their views, observations and proposals to a parliamentary committee.

Native women attending were: Margaret Thomson, President, Native Women's Association of Canada; Philomena Ross and Mary Two-Axe Early, of the National Committee on Indian Rights for Indian Women; Jeanette Lavell, President of the Ontario Native Women's Association; and Barbara Brake of the Native Council of Canada.

From excerpts of minutes from the meeting: 'The loss in court by Jeanette Lavell was certainly a setback for all native women, but we have not given up. The Lavell case served to unite Indian women and awaken us to the injustices suffered needlessly over the last century; a struggle that will continue until native women are given their rightful place in Indian and Canadian Society.'

(Reprinted from ACSW Bulletin)

### FEMINIST HEALTH CENTRE TOUR

The Detroit Feminist Women's Health Centre is planning a tour of Ontario. We would like to share self-help and abortion information and establish communications for political action on population control and women's rights. Self-help clinic presentations will be available. Contact the Feminist Women's Health Centre, 2445 W. 8 Mile Road, Detroit, Michigan 48203 (313) 892-7790. For further information write in care of Irene Mariposa.





## WOMEN'S INFO BURNT OUT

Women's Information and Referral Centre suffered extensive damage to our Centre in the old Ste-Jeanne d'Arc Nurses' Residence in a fire in the early hours of the morning of August 18th. Furniture, files and reference materials were a total loss. Our three front rooms were completely destroyed: our library and all our books and journals, and our double front room where we ran our info and referral service and drop-in centre. From these rooms the fire burnt up into the second floor, which was vacant.

This fire follows a series of mishaps which we have mentioned in previous newsletters, including two burglaries within 6 weeks in which over \$2,500 of supplies and equipment were stolen. For over a year and a half, we have been fighting to save these buildings from demolition and to renovate them into low-income housing for single-parent families and senior citizens. We have successfully battled two eviction notices and successfully fought a Superior Court Injunction brought against us by our landlord, Ste-Jeanne d'Arc Hospital. As well, we have formed a housing coop with reps from Save Montreal and Logement Communautaire and in April 1976 submitted an offer to purchase to the hospital and applied to Central Mortgage and Housing for funding of the project.

What happens now? This has been a serious setback; we are without water or electricity; however, we are attempting to keep our services open using the half of the building that wasn't burnt. Please call us at 842-1066.

## CHILD CUSTODY

Dear friends,

An Ottawa lesbian mother is fighting to regain legal custody of her young son. Financially, she does not have the resources to do this alone. Child custody is an issue with important implications for both the women's and gay movements. It can be fought only in the courts, by the establishment of favourable precedents.

As a result, GO and The Ottawa Women's Centre have jointly created the 'Equal Rights for Lesbians' defence fund to provide financial assistance. Both have made initial contributions. GO recently held a 'Benefit for Lesbian Rights', half the proceeds of which went to the fund.

This appeal for contributions is being made to individuals, women's and gay groups across Canada. Cheques and money orders are to be made out to The Ottawa Women's Centre and marked 'Equal Rights for Lesbians'. Donations are tax deductible and receipts may be obtained on request.

Sincerely,  
K. Forbes  
Co-ordinator,  
Equal Rights for Lesbians

I belong to a group of women here in Toronto who are trying now to break into what, up until now, has been thought of as being a male-oriented sport, namely, amateur wrestling. The form of wrestling we are attempting to organize takes on the form of fitness, non-competitive, amateur wrestling.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could help us to start establishing ourselves by mailing me any information which you might already have at your disposal about women who are either already into amateur wrestling of women who would be interested in getting involved in wrestling. Do you know of any individuals or organizations which might be willing to help us in the way of information about the availability of women's wrestling in Canada (or the U.S.), in the way of financial support or moral support? Do you know of women in Toronto who would be interested in this sort of exercise club?

Our organization has as its underlying philosophy the idea that all individuals have the right freedom of choice in sport. It is in the spirit of this philosophy that I hope you will try to aid us in our endeavour to open up this sport to women.

Michelle LeBlanc  
care of M. Farber  
707 Finch Ave. W., Apt. 407  
Downsview, Ontario

## TORRES APPEAL REFUSED

Lureida Torres, a Puerto Rican Independentista and a member of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP), found in contempt of court on May 13 for refusing to cooperate with a federal grand jury interrogation took her appeal to the Supreme Court which has subsequently refused to hear it. On June 24, over 75 demonstrators protested her jailing in front of the courthouse at Foley Square.

Prior to surrendering herself to U.S. marshals, Lureida Torres stood on the steps of the courthouse and reaffirmed her commitment to the Puerto Rican liberation struggle. 'No matter how many of us you send to jail, the movement will grow stronger every day.'

The grand jury investigation concerns the 1975 bombings of Fraunces Tavern, several banks and insurance companies by the Armed Forces of Puerto Rican National Liberation (FALN) who claimed credit for the acts.

Although the PSP has renounced any connection with the bombings, the government continues its harassment of Lureida Torres and its attack on the Puerto Rican independence movement and on women's participation in that struggle.

Lureida Torres now joins thousands of political prisoners in the U.S. and Puerto Rico who have been working for the independence of their homeland. For more information concerning her case and those of others contact: Grand Jury Project, 853 Broadway, Room 1415, New York, N.Y. 10003 (212) 533-2299.

—Reprinted from *Off Our Backs*  
Info from the Grand Jury Project and *Workers World*

## HUDSON'S BAY IMPERIALISM

May 21st, the Hudson Bay Co. had its 307th annual general meeting in Winnipeg. 'The Bay' has had a long history of resource imperialism and control of local economies in Northern Canada. 'The Bay' built its multi-national empire on hundreds of years of extraction of raw furs and exploitation of Indian and Inuit labour. Today, though the trade in furs continues, it is 'The Bay's' control of retail trade that maintains its economic power over remote northern communities. In many northern villages 'The Bay' is not only the sole store but the post office, telephone, loan company and bank, i.e., it is the only commercial and financial institution.

'The Bay's' tactics, learned in Canada, are now being applied, with similar profitability, in the third world. In Namibia, 'The Bay' continues its extraction of raw furs and exploitation of native people's labour—only the pelt has changed. 'The Bay' is the major handler of Karakul fur, the third largest Namibian export. This fur is used to make luxury coats, retailing in Toronto for up to \$5,000. The sale of Karakul fur earns 'The Bay's' London auction house \$1,125,000 each year in commissions alone. A Namibian agricultural worker earns as little as \$54 a year.

'The Bay's' presence in Namibia violates the United Nations resolutions of 1966 and 1969 and the International Court of Justice's ruling of 1971 that all nations abstain from entering into any economic or political relationship with South Africa concerning Namibia. (South Africa is in violation not only of the United Nations but also of the League of Nations by refusing to grant independence to the Namibian people.)

It is time The Bay was charged with its multi-national crimes!

### THE BAY IN CANADA

Today, though the trade in furs con-

tinues, it is mainly through a monopolistic chain of retail stores that the Bay keeps native peoples dependent on its trading posts. 'Perpetual debt binds us firmly to the store, and having no money we have to rely on the Bay manager to further credit to buy traps to hunt and food to eat.' (George Manuel, President, Native Indian Brotherhood)

More than 225 Northern Bay Stores extend from Newfoundland to Whitehorse, and north of Lake Superior. The majority are located in remote communities inhabited mainly by Indian and Inuit (Eskimo).

Most Northern native communities are located on reserve lands, and tend to be small and isolated. There are few opportunities for employment on reserves: there is little or no farmland and the areas are too small to live by the traditional pursuits of hunting and trapping. As a result, unemployment among native peoples is 50 per cent, while it is only 6 per cent among Canadians as a whole. Three-quarters of the native peoples earn less than \$3,000 per year. These communities, however, are invaluable for the Bay's retail stores, and merchandise sales represent 95 per cent of the Bay's business transacted in the north today. With few exceptions, the local company store is the only store. This means that the Bay can set the prices for the goods it sells, with no check from a competing outlet. And the prices it sets are high.

### THE BAY IN NAMIBIA

Namibia's 760,000 blacks (85 per cent of the total population) live on reserves or bantustans in the northern one-third of the country. Here, food shortages resulting from an arid climate and sandy

soils force them off the land and into employment in the white-owned and white-controlled farms and mines in the southern part of the country. Namibia's 90,000 whites are in full control of two-thirds of the country, which includes all fertile farmland, mines, ports, urban areas, and transport facilities.



South Africa has been the administrative authority for Namibia since World War 1. It has consistently defied the UN Charter obligation to grant independence to the people of Namibia. In 1966, the UN terminated South Africa's mandate over Namibia, but South Africa continues its illegal occupation, and has imposed most of its apartheid policies on the Namibian people. In 1971, the International Court of Justice called on UN member states to abstain from any economic or political involvement in Namibia.

Canada accepts these rulings and recognizes South Africa's occupation as illegal. Yet 'official Canada' has done no-

thing to prevent the Bay from continuing its illegal involvement.

'The unwillingness of the government of Canada to instigate measures which would effectively prevent further Canadian complicity in this exploitation and oppression reinforces and perpetuates the status quo.' (Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility)

The Bay has become a highly international and diversified operation, with major mineral rights throughout Western Canada, and petroleum rights in off-shore South Viet Nam, the North Sea, the Atlantic Coast, the Arctic and Canada.

Canadian ownership of the Bay has increased to 59 per cent from the mere 7 per cent which existed in 1970, when the head office was moved from London to Winnipeg.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP THE NATIVE PEOPLES OF CANADA AND NAMIBIA

Help to publicize the issue in your local media. Write to the Bay to protest their action: Mr George T. Richardson, Governor, Hudson's Bay Company, Hudson's Bay House, 77 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Insist that the Bay pull out of Namibia. Insist that local Bay stores in northern native communities be turned over to native control. Write to the Canadian government and insist that pressure be put on the Bay to withdraw from its illegal involvement in Namibia: Hon. Allan J. MacEachen, Minister of External Affairs, House of Commons, Ottawa.

Support action and information groups working on the Canadian and Namibian native peoples situation.

tcisac (416) 967-5562  
Native Studies Collective (416) 921-2434



## Abortion in West Germany

# DEFEAT FOR FEMINISM

LUCILLE  
GRINDHAMMER

On February 25, 1975, the West German Supreme Court announced that the Parliamentary decision allowing women the unconditional right to abortion through the third month of pregnancy was unconstitutional and therefore void. News of the decision was immediately broadcast over the mass media, setting off angry demonstrations in cities across the country. This inspired typically reassuring and palliating promises from leading politicians to seek a more acceptable law. The result has been the June 1976 reform bill granting women the right of abortion up to three months in cases involving rape, danger to the mother's life, anticipated birth deformities, and 'grave hardship'.

Not only tragic in terms of what it means for the estimated one-half to one million German women who subject themselves to illegal abortions every year, the new law is clear warning from the government that the slow female awakening which began four years ago will neither be encouraged nor tolerated. Recently the Frankfurt police took action against that city's women's centre for organizing three bus trips to Dutch abortion clinics, and this was as much an attempt to enforce the new Court ruling as it was a warning to women's groups to remain benign.

Since the women's movement has been hesitant in developing, this conservative abortion stance could bury it completely. In spite of a few determined voices, the West German women's movement lags light-years behind its North American counterpart.

Although West Germany is economically and politically the strongest nation in Europe today, women here are as economically exploited as women in other Western countries. According to the Federal Department of Labour and Social Research, half the women in this country work, thereby comprising one-third of the entire work force. They earn, however, only one-half to two-thirds of what men do. In general, women have been confined to three low-status professions: sales help, secretarial work, and beauty parlor employees. The government is clearly in male hands despite the fact that women constitute 52 per cent of the population. Helge Pross, a professor of sociology at the University of Frankfurt, has pointed out that only 6 per cent of all representatives in the Parliament are women. And even though Annemarie Renger has been president of the Bundestag since 1973, she neither owes her position to the support of women nor uses it for them. Educationally women have not succeeded in enter-

ing the higher levels of the school system. Only a small minority reach the university: the actual number compares unfavourably with similar percentages in other European nations as seen in a study done under the auspices of the European Common Market. This fact is not surprising when one considers that *Der Stern*, Germany's most successful illustrated magazine, revealed that 64 per cent of all German university professors preferred not to have women in their classes.

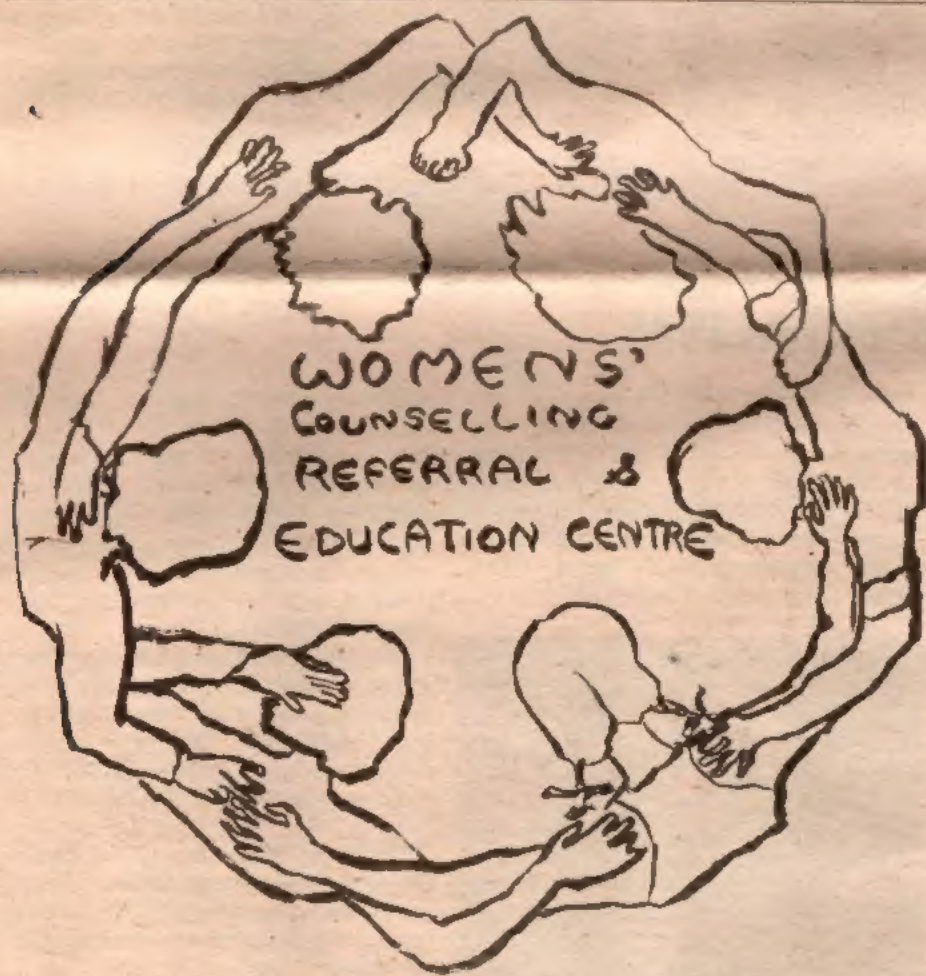
Accompanying these obvious signs of discrimination are subtler indications suggesting that German women find their situation difficult to bear. The 1975 *Women's Calendar* includes the following: 1 out of 4 women confess they would rather be men; 1 out of 10 housewives is on the verge of a nervous breakdown; and 7 out of 10 female office workers are dissatisfied with their work. Yet, within the last few months, *Der Spiegel*, this country's *Newsweek*, reported that the majority of men here stubbornly persist in the illusion that West Germany has already realized equality of the sexes!

Encouraged by the agitation for equal

rights taking place among women in the United States, West German women began organizing in 1971. That year, after 374 prominent women confessed to having had illegal abortions, women's groups formed in Hamburg, Berlin, and Munich. In the view of Alice Schwarzer, Germany's most prominent feminist, they successfully rallied enough of the 70 per cent women who favoured legalizing abortion into forcing the Brandt government (which desperately needed their votes to remain in power) to push through the abortion bill of June 5, 1974. Starting out exclusively devoted to reforming the old abortion law, these groups expanded their aims. Today approximately 100 such groups exist, and *Der Spiegel* has begrudgingly estimated that they have 20,000 active members. Consciousness-raising, women's centre, rock festivals, and occasional female publications do exist, attesting to a women's movement here. But, the movement that grew out of the abortion campaign has not succeeded in capturing the support of enough West German women to have become an effective instrument of change; it was, in fact, too weak to prevent the Court's reversal of the abortion reform.

The causes for this failure lie deep in the fabric of German society as well as in the structure of the movement itself. In spite of the splendid nineteenth-century examples provided by Louise Otto Peters, the initiator of the German women's movement, who warned her contemporaries, 'History has shown that those who neglect to think of their own rights end up forgotten', and Helene Lange, who fought for female education, West German women have been identified with children, cooking, and churches for centuries. Even the winning of the vote in 1918 and the high percentage of women who work have not caused a substantial number of West German women to question their traditional roles. That a patriarchal tradition still survives today is seen in the present federal law guaranteeing equal right for men and women, which unembarrassingly describes women as the heart of the family and denies them the right to work when it interferes with their 'wifely' responsibilities. Is it, therefore, so surprising that three-quarters of all West German women, according to the *Women's Calendar*, are so busy regularly

—continued on page 22



In 1973 a group of women from Toronto agencies got together to discuss the lack of appropriate referral services and programmes for women and also the sexist way women are treated in therapy.

WCRC is a service which was developed to create more choices for women who are seeking counselling. They have received an annual grant of \$70,000 for the next three years from 'Non-medical Use of Drugs'. WCRC attempts to provide women with referrals to therapists who are aware of the present struggles that women are going through in redefining themselves.

As women often we do not know who we are. Our self-images are clouded by what we have learned we should be and should think as good wives, mothers and workers. Our efforts to live up to the feminine ideal or to change it, have left us feeling unhappy, confused and depressed.

In many respects traditional therapy has helped us to deal with our problems

by encouraging us to adapt to our roles rather than by challenging us to grow, change and develop. WCRC offers referral to counsellors and therapists who have a keen sensitivity to the special problems that women face. They have interviewed many therapists in the city in an attempt to find those who incorporate non-sexist attitudes into their therapeutic practice. They also sponsor self-help groups in which women run the groups themselves and provide information about yoga, massage therapy, intuition and consciousness-raising, and peer self-help groups such as 'Revaluation Counselling'.

Re-evaluation Counselling is a process whereby people learn to exchange effective support in order to eliminate the effects of past distress experiences. According to RC theory, these experiences have obscured our true positive qualities and have resulted in us not acting as intelligently, loving and zestfully as we naturally would. Through the peer process of co-counselling, people take



turns reviewing their old distress experiences and healing their old hurts. Healing occurs when the natural process of emotional discharge (laughing, crying, trembling, yawning, etc.) is allowed to take place to completion.

This results in the gradual recovery of the full human potential. People generally join classes where they learn to co-counsel, thereby becoming part of both local and international communities of co-counsellors.

The staff at WCRC consider the following to be relevant issues of importance in non-sexist therapy:

1. We hope that the Women's Movement will have created an impact on therapists, and that feminism has some personal meaning for them. We look for people who have given careful thought to issues of special import to women: Rape, Abortion, and Lesbianism. We feel that rape is an assault, and that women always and at any point have the right to say 'no' and to set limits. We feel that women should have the right to choose to have an abortion, and we expect therapists to be aware of the present abortion law and its implications. We expect our therapists to be non-judgemental about gay lifestyles and to feel comfortable working with lesbians.
2. We look for therapists with a non-clinical orientation, i.e., those who focus on strengths rather than pathology, and who have a wholistic approach, i.e., some knowledge about nutrition, body awareness, and alternatives to medication such as relaxation exercises. We feel uncomfortable about over-use of

medication and view ECT and committal as last resorts in cases of suicidal and homicidal danger.

3. Related to a traditional medical-model approach is a tendency to see therapists as powerful and all-knowing. We look for some awareness by therapists of their power position, optimally gleaned through the therapist's own experience in therapy, and resulting in a commitment to analyze the power relationships. One of the ways this equalization can occur is through the willingness of the therapist to share personal information.
4. In addition, we look for flexible non-stereotypical attitudes towards roles in the family.

5. Awareness of one's own class bias is crucial in therapists. Since many therapists are from a middle-class background, and are trained in academic settings which are often biased, we look for awareness of social realities, such as the oppression of Native, Black and immigrant women.

6. Finally, one of the most important perspectives to us is the therapist's ability and commitment to perceive problems in their social as well as their intrapsychic context. We feel many emotional stresses and problems are directly connected to social and political realities. For example, depression in women is not solely intrapsychic, but is often the result of the social stereotypes which discourage women from expressing anger.

For further information, phone 925-1155.



## WOMEN'S HOSTEL FIGHTS BACK AGAINST CUTBACKS

Ever since Nellie's Hostel opened in June 1974 to provide an emergency shelter for the growing number of women leaving intolerable home situations, the hostel has been struggling to obtain adequate funding.

The recent government cutbacks in funding have hit Nellie's and other crisis centres more severely than other social services. Women have never been a major concern with the government. At present, the number of permanent emergency beds for men in Toronto is 1,184 and 77 for women.

Struggling along on \$84,000, this past year has meant understaffing, deterioration of sanitary conditions and lack of

security precautions. There is only one staff person to cover the overnight shift, and several staff have already been beaten up. In order to operate effectively, Nellie's needs \$168,000. Government response to this request has been 'chase after the corporations and foundations'.

A five month appeal to 100 private corporations and charitable foundations netted \$600. Among those who refused to fund Nellie's were: Canadian Bank of Commerce, Eaton's and Garfield Weston Charitable Foundation.

Tired of asking big business and government for support, Nellie's is now demanding that they no longer be

ignored.

On 26 August, an emergency occupation was called by the staff and residents after many months of coping with short staffing, lack of funds and the consequent need to turn more and more women away. This is at a time when government cutbacks are creating more of a demand for emergency shelter. Nellie's struggle is being supported strongly by other community and women's groups who see that the situation at Nellie's is a mirror image of women's lives and of the financial crisis that many community services run by and for women are facing. Nellie's is only the tip of the iceberg of how the government is making its cutbacks on the backs of women. Women have never been a government priority.

*'When servicing other people, both in the home and out of it, as the role of women in this society, we can see who the attack is being waged against most directly when the government picks social services as the focus of its cutbacks. The push is on to throw those social services back into the home to save money. How does it save money. Because there they get it for free from we women. So now there's less day-care space, fewer hospital beds, less times allowed for recovery, fewer psychiatric beds and fewer counselling facilities. And those who don't have others to call upon to take care of them for free are left to fend for themselves. While our social service jobs are threatened, the servicing of others—the nursing, 'mothering', and counselling—is thrown back into that 'private sphere', the home.'*

Nellie's attempts to reduce the brutality on women's lives by providing a temporary place where women can come when they need a place to stay and don't have enough money in their pockets to afford a place of their own.

It has become increasingly difficult for women who stay at Nellie's to find places they can afford to live in within a short period of time. For some, this means returning to an intolerable home situation where beatings may be the order of the day. For many, it means ending up in a run-down rooming house resulting in poor health, a return to drinking or having to put up with break-ins and illegal evictions and eventually having to return to Nellie's. And because there aren't long-term residences, many women are forced to move out on their own without any ongoing support before they have the resources to survive. Only a couple of months ago, Grace Bates, an elderly woman, after sleeping in a wheelchair in Allan Gardens for several days, died at Nellie's Hostel. Media coverage of the occupation has been passively sympathetic, focusing innocuously on Nellie's specific problem while playing down its political significance.

Sitting on the steps of Queen's Park, waving placards and smiling cheese at the Media, while Metro and Wintario are building a \$100,000 trout pond on Toronto Island won't force the government to change their priorities. Already Nellie's and its supporting groups are realizing that the political game demands strong organized support so that energies are effectively channelled and not drained by the delaying tactics of government or diverted to soliciting token support from the press, which is now beginning to respond to pressure from government sources to discredit Nellie's. While the government is stalling with vague promises of money, nothing is unlikely until our anger is expressed more militantly. Radical rhetoric must be followed by radical action.



Marianne Langton

## Wages For Housework LESBIAN CONFERENCE HELD IN TORONTO

Eighty Canadian, American and English women—black, white, lesbian and straight—gathered July 24 in Toronto for a conference on lesbians and the Wages for Housework Campaign sponsored by Toronto Wages Due Lesbians. They were seeking concrete direction on how to build their power as lesbians.

The first session, on autonomy, began with an international panel which included Ruth Hall of Wages Due Lesbians, England, Wilmette Brown of Safire and Black Women for Wages for Housework of New York, and Francie Wyland of Toronto Wages Due Lesbians. The three women elaborated on the fight for the independence lesbians need in their daily lives and the implications of that fight in their organizing with other women.

Half explored the power over lesbians which is conferred on straight women by their legitimacy and their access to a man's (higher) wage. This power will continue to divide women, she said, as long as accusations of lesbianism are used to keep all women in line.

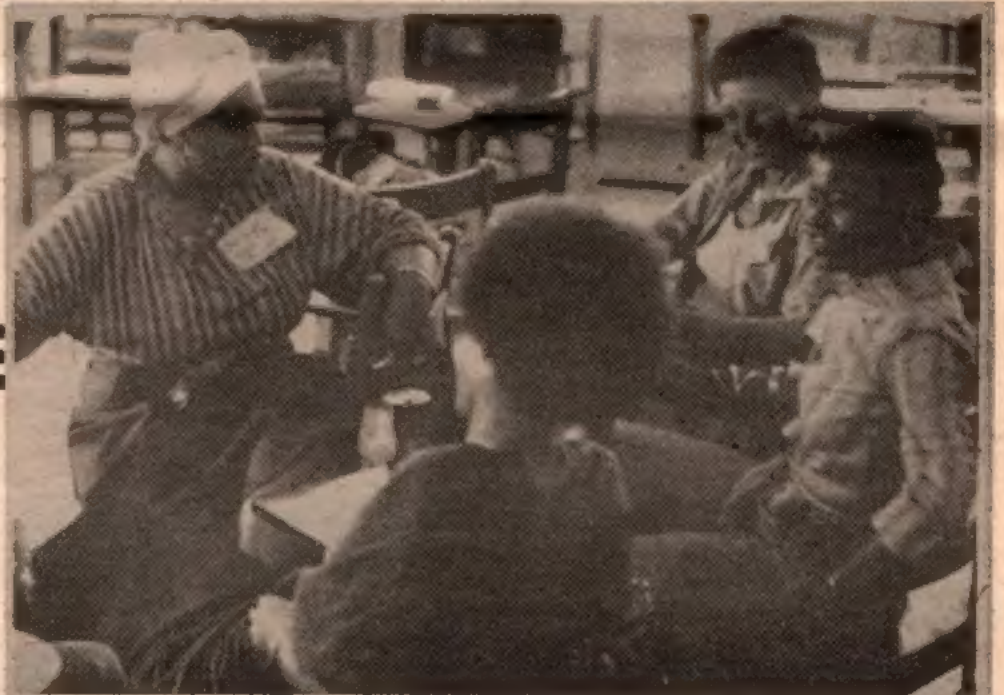
Brown described the three levels of autonomy needed by black women. First, autonomy is needed from black men because 'we could not and cannot now count on them to defend or articu-

late our interests as women'. Second, autonomy is needed from white women because, although all women do the same work, black women have less access to education, training and decent-paying jobs. Also, because black men are often unemployed, black women are forced outside the home to accept the lowest-paying jobs or into prostitution to gain access to a white man's wage.

Third, autonomy is needed from black straight women. Because of society's definition of black women as breeders, whores, and the most 'sexual' of women, a black lesbian is a super-freak.

Wyland described the lesbian movement as millions of mostly closeted women fighting for the possibility of sleeping with the people closest to them: other women, fighting against sexual servitude to men and against the penalties for refusing that sexual work. She explained that the economic crisis—cutbacks, wage-freezes, price hikes—is an attack on the independence from men that women, including lesbians, have fought for. She stressed that the crisis made the building of the power of lesbians an urgent task.

The three presentations clarified the significance of lesbian autonomy. Women who previously have had no



Black Women For Wages For Housework, from New York, at the Wages Due Lesbians Conference

common ground can end their isolation and join forces on the basis of their common need for the time, money and choices they have so far been denied. The Wages for Housework Campaign can unite lesbians with other women without ignoring differences, because black and lesbian women have their own autonomous organizations within the Campaign to put forward their specific needs.

In the final general meeting, Wages Due Lesbians detailed their work in organizing in the Family Allowance Protest and the Wages for Housework Campaign. Brown and Wyland said it was fallacious to separate the fight for wages for housework from other struggles. In the Wages for Housework Campaign, they said, it is possible to point out in every struggle what is at stake for women, black women and lesbians.

Wyland noted that because women raise children, the threat of losing them is a powerful weapon which the state uses to keep women in line. Any woman who fights against dependence on men is regarded as 'unfit'. Lesbians face very

bleak prospects in a custody battle. She emphasized that most cases never go to court. 'We have to give up the kids' she said 'because only men have the money to support them and they are winning custody more often.'

Wyland is writing a pamphlet on child custody and spoke on this subject as a member of Wages Due Lesbians on Global Television news shortly after the conference.

At a short summation session, a resolution was unanimously adopted which stated that all women were entitled to wages for the housework they do and that lesbians are kept in the closet by the lack of this wage. A second resolution, also passed unanimously, stated:

*'No lesbian or any other woman should face the blackmail of losing custody of her children in court through social pressure or through poverty. We demand from the government the money we need to keep our children without being forced to depend on a man.'*

—by Heather Stirling

Reprinted from Body Politic



# WOMEN

Most westerners think of the face as the most important part of a person's appearance. In the middle ages, the face was regarded as the mirror of the soul, and even today we use the physiognomy to make all kinds of generalizations and judgements about the person who owns it. People who have nice faces always disarm us, and we are shocked when they do something underhanded, sneaky, or chauvinistic.

Perhaps the only time a woman thinks that her face is not of primary importance is when her breasts and a passion for dating begin to develop. Then she senses that the size of her bosom is more material than the shape of her face; in fact, she learns that a potential date looks at tits before teeth. With the exception, though, of a few years of budding adolescence, the face more than any other part of the anatomy, receives the greatest attention.

We assume, rather naively, that our values are universal and that they pertain to Moslem womanhood as well. If the face were not regarded as the most important part of the anatomy, why would Moslem women be required to



keep it covered from the bridge of the nose down with a flimsy piece of dark material? We envision these poor creatures peering out over their oriental veils, hoping that a cough or a sneeze will not displace their protection.

**A wisp of hair that slips out may arouse more disfavour than an accidentally revealed leg.**

In Tehran, a multicultural city of five million people, veils, or *chadors* as they are called, do not usually hide the face. (1) A properly fitting *chador* must always cover the hair and hands of the woman; of course, as a result, her legs, torso, shoulders, and breasts are also enshrouded. A wisp of hair that slips out may arouse more disfavour than an accidentally revealed leg. There are no buttons or zippers to secure a *chador* (which can be made from a variety of materials—from heavy black gauzy pastel). Instead the *chador* is kept in place with the forefinger and thumb of each hand holding the ends crossed beneath the chin, which accounts for the way the hands are covered. The only part of the body completely exposed is the face. What then is the purpose of the veil if the most distinctive, if not most attractive, part of the *chadori* (a woman who wears the *chadoris* showing)?

Middle class Persian women in their late fifties and sixties who live in conservative and traditional Tehrani households often do not know the stories of their neighbourhood, sometimes they are not even aware of the names of the streets that intersect with the one on which they live. Many of these women

rarely venture out of their homes alone. Their husbands, fathers, sons, nephews, uncles and cousins take them to their destination. These women do not go marketing, their husbands do the shopping. These women do all the cleaning and cooking and anything else that has to be done inside the house. The place of the traditional Persian woman is within the confines of the home. Everything she needs is brought to her. Like the queen bee, she rules in the hive, but rarely can leave it.

If she must go out, she must go out under cover. Her hands and hair must be completely hidden since they are considered her most erotic parts. If you ever see a group of Persian women ('Liberated ones' of course) dancing you will notice that the hands are moving far more seductively than the pelvis, the torso, or the shoulders. Wearing the *chadoris* like carrying a furled pup tent on top of your head. It is wearing your home away from home. (Camping tents, by the way, are called *chadors* in Iranian camping stores). Hiding hands and hair is a complex process if you are serious about it. In fact you can't do much else besides walk straight ahead if you are holding your *chador* properly. Not only does the veil shield the woman from the outside perverted world, but it also shields the world from the woman, often to the extent that she is unfamiliar with her surroundings. The *chador* acts like the counterpart of the donkey's blinkers.

Once indoors, a traditional Persian lady is veil-free except on two occasions. When she prays, she must don the veil (does she have to protect herself from Allah's gaze?) If she is a good Moslem, she prays five times a day, and her veil can never be far from her reach. When a male who is not her father, brother, or son visits the house, she must also put on the *chador*. Even her sister's husband may get fanciful ideas if he should see her hands or hair, so she keeps them hidden. However, she can be released from the veil while she is cooking one of those elaborate Persian feasts. She would not do a very good job cleaning the rice or cubing the lamb if her hands were occupied with keeping her *chador* together.

When I speak of the traditional middle-class Persian woman, then, I am referring to a woman who is almost completely removed from the world beyond her family (television recently has become a peephole on the world). She has little purpose outside her home. She ought to be shy and retiring in the presence of strangers if, that is, she is ever in their presence. She is completely dependent on her husband, brother, or son for financial support. You must wonder if the typical Persian lady ever does anything. Well, she does several things, all behind the walls of her home.

**She must produce a male heir. She has to prove that her husband's seed is so strong that male babies can spring from it.**

The Persian woman has many things to do at home. Persian cooking is extremely time-consuming, since much of it grew out of a need to make tough and almost unpalatable (by Western standards, at least) meats delicious and tasty. The various stews (*khoreshehs*) that are the mainstay of Persian cuisine require long preparation: vegetables must be cleaned and cut, the lamb must be fried or braised before stewing, and the mixture must be cooked for hours under a careful eye. Literally, a woman cannot leave the kitchen if she wants to serve dinner that afternoon (Iranians eat their big meal at midday and sleep it off during the afternoon). Besides cooking, the woman cleans house, sews clothes, and performs the ordinary duties of a housekeeper and homemaker. However, none of these services will be duly ap-

preciated or even respectfully acknowledged if the lady doesn't do one thing, she has to make a son. She must produce a male heir. 'she has to prove that her husband's seed is so strong that male babies can spring from it.

A wife who fails to produce sons is in trouble. The Shah divorced his second wife Soraya because all she could make was girls. The present shahbanou, Farah, has produced two boys and two girls. Her position is secure. Once a son or more is on the scene the lady of the household becomes free to do all kinds of things, within the context of her role as wife, mother, and homemaker. She can get too tired to have sex with her husband, a man who was probably chosen for her a month before she came out of her mother's womb.

The tradition of the wedding mirror illuminates the connubial relationship. The mirror is framed like a picture and is enclosed by two panels that meet in the middle and have to be opened like doors. The panels are usually decorated with miniatures of hunting scenes, flowers, polo players, and lovers. The mirrors come in all sizes, but the concept behind them all is the same. On the night before the wedding, the woman retreated into a room by herself and opened the door to the wedding mirror. At that point, her husband-to-be was supposed to walk into the room and stand behind her so that she could see him, possibly for the first time, in the mirror. It is fair to assume that she was given a chance here to prepare herself for the rest of her life. She could either hide her horror or contain her joy.

In either case, she knew that she would be expected to make boy babies with the man whose face was reflected in the mirror. Once a son is born, the woman can relax a little. For instance, she won't be required to talk to her husband too much since most of his time will be spent at work or hanging out with other men at tea houses or Western-style bars. Even 'modern' Iranian men leave their wives at home when they go out, possibly a carry-over from the veil mentality - no one is to see the woman. When she does accompany her husband, she is usually expected to sit quietly and acquire wisdom.

Naturally, a woman gains status with the birth of a son. Any daughters on the

scene are regarded as attendants. Mama's chief concern is her son and his health. She devotes herself to him fully and at the expense of all other things, for nothing is so precious to her as her son. After devoting herself to her sons for years, a woman achieves a sphere of influence. Adult Iranian sons are the most loyal sons in the world. Nothing is impossible for Mama. If Mama is sick, her sons visit her every day until she is better. If she is lonely, her sons stay home to amuse her. I remember one son in Mashad who confessed that he was not as dutiful as most Iranian sons. He visited his mother only twice a week (this figure has nothing to do with the number of times she visits him). If sonny happens to go to the USA for his education and starts making it big, he will drop everything should Mama call—a business, a medical practice, in some instances, a wife. To an American Mama, it may sound great, this filial fealty, but an Iranian mother has very little outside this guilt-ridden, obsessive devotion from her sons. And although her sons will always take care of her in her old age, her situation is ungratifying. Her sons will respond to complaints of poor health, but not to cries of boredom and despondency.

**When Ali hints that he may return to the States, his mother gets sick. She had discovered that this is the only way she can be effective. It is her form of self-expression.**

I got some sense of this after listening to a friend of mine tell me about her mother-in-law. Joan, from South Carolina, met Ali while he was studying engineering at the State University in Raleigh. She married him, lived in California for a while and then accompanied him to Tehran. Ali's mother lives in an apartment house that she shares with two of Ali's brothers and their families. (Ali's father died about five years ago.) Each family occupies a separate floor in the building. Ali's mother is completely cared for. The woman is never alone: she cannot bear being by herself. If a daughter-in-law is not with her, a grandchild is. Her sons cannot spend too much time with her because they are in the outside world working. They assume their wives will attend to their mothers. Joan got out of much of this daughter-in-law-in-attendance role because she and Ali live in another neighbourhood, no small accident. Ali's mother complains about her back, her nerves, her heart and her stomach. She has high blood pressure and periodically has respiratory attacks. The woman is only in her mid-fifties. When Ali hints that he may return to the States, his mother gets sick. She had discovered that this is the only way she can be effective. It is her form of self-expression. She represents the traditional Persian woman confronted with modern world. Probably a traditional Persian woman of fifty years ago had fewer ailments since her sons were never very far away and never married American women (by the way, even today American women are regarded as unclean by true Moslems).

Ali's mother can be very casual about her veil. Who, she thinks, can a sick old woman entice? However, her eldest son wants his wife to wear a *chador*, and out of respect for her son's feelings, Mama feels she should also wear one. When he is not around, she might forget to put it on, even if the mailman comes to the door.

While my husband and I were living in Tehran, Joan and Ali invited us to their home for Christmas dinner. The members of Ali's family love to celebrate Christmas despite the fact that they are Moslem. They buy the most elaborate presents, they help to decorate the tree, and they eat all the turkey





# IN IRAN

LINDA HAMALIAN.

See next issue for last part of the article on Iran.

and cranberry sauce they can. We spent one of our more exotic Christmas eves with them. Ali's mother and sisters-in-law were in *chador* except when they went into the kitchen, where there were no men, of course, to help Joan (to be accurate, I should add that once in a while a man did sneak into the kitchen for a nip of carefully-concealed Johnny Walker Red—Iran's second favourite scotch after Johnny Walker Black, though vodka is the booze most Iranians who drink prefer). After dinner, the men got out their musical instruments and the dancing began. But who was dancing? The ladies in the *chador* had enough to do just keeping their veils from slipping off their heads and opening up. The two granddaughters had the floor to themselves. Because neither of them had reached puberty, they were *chdaor-free*—though children in the provinces are often required to don them. Ali's mother had made dancing skirts for them, very short and full, with elastic bands at the waist. Pepsi-Cola and Canada Dry bottle caps bordered the hem of the skirt so that every time the girls swung their hips, the caps made a kind of rhythmical sound. Their hips kept very good time to the music, which was very Middle Eastern despite the occasion. Their hands beckoning seductively, their shoulder-length hair swinging, they were innocently wicked. The poor girls, though, had only a few years left before they would vanish, so to speak, into their veils. Their public dancing days, literally, were numbered.

Strangely enough, most women westernized or not, are fashion-conscious whether they are in the *chador* or out. Last year as many women in Tehran as in New York were stumbling on the sidewalks because their shoes had three-inch platforms. Joan, who has simple tastes, surprised Ali's family when they first saw her because she did not look as though she had freshly stepped out of the pages of *Voque*.

Actually Iranian westernized women are preoccupied with fashion, make-up, and appearance in general. They have put aside their *chadors* for a different kind of mask. To get a perspective on the status of the modern Persian woman, think of the American middle-class lady

of the early fifties. Like her American sister of an earlier era, her careers are baby-maker, homemaker, and house-keeper. If she has her boy-babies early, hires maids, cooks, and gardeners, she eliminates her responsibilities and devotes all of her time to herself. Devoting time to yourself in Tehran means getting enough beauty sleep, having your hair styled twice weekly in the latest cut and colour, and getting a manicure and pedicure. It means having lunch in a semi-continental restaurant with other women who are as fortunate as you. Most of these women are sisters, cousins, aunts, and mothers. It also means picking up your children from the bilingual schools you are sending them to and driving them to their English-language tutors (Tehran has more Mercedes-Benz cars than any city in Germany). Many Iranians send their children to English or American style schools because they want their children to attend an English or American university and some forward-looking Iranians arrange to give birth in the States so that their children can have American passports.

By the time a modern Persian lady has risen, made up, eaten, assigned duties to the houseservants, met her friends for lunch, chauffeured her children to their tutors and come home. It is probably around 6:00. Her husband is not home because he is at his office being doctor, administrator, entrepreneur, educator or any combination of these things. It is not uncommon for an Iranian professional to hold down two or three positions. Doctors have their private practice and teach at the university. They may also have a job working for the government, giving airlines pilots checkups before they make transatlantic crossings. Teachers may have courses in three separate schools. A department chairman can have a full-time faculty position at another college. Anyway, the lady has a few hours to straighten herself up after a busy day so that she can look good for her husband. When he comes home, they may go out to dinner with friends. Couples don't like being by themselves in the evening any more than women like being alone during the day. No matter

what it may do to the head, it is not the kind of life that etches premature wrinkles in the face.

How does the modern Iranian lady maintain her looks? Besides applying a variety of cosmetics to her skin every day, she pays homage to the plastic surgeon. Wealthy Iranian females become familiar with cosmetic surgery early. If their noses are large, they will have them bobbed. Even if they don't come from wealthy homes, they will have nose jobs. I know one woman whose maid borrowed money from her so that she could have her nose fixed. Also, if a Persian maiden lets her hormones get the better of her, or happens to fall in love with someone before she is married, she may be hymen-less before her wedding day. This is definitely not good. It is so bad, in fact that her family will take her to the local cosmetic surgeon to have her hymen repaired. Second to nose bobs, cherry operations are the most popular forms of cosmetic surgery. After all, daughters without hymens may end up without husbands.

Once a lady is well established in a big home filled with servants and children, she concentrates on preserving her youth. She will have the bags under her eyes removed, the wrinkles falling down her neck banished, and the skin over her cheekbones stretched. If you study the pictures of Empress Farah you will understand what the modern day Iranian woman wants to resemble. Farah is a prime example of plastic surgery success. The Shah felt that her image was not good in the beginning. The queen he had divorced because she had produced no sons had been popular, beautiful in a Hollywood way, and the people were sorry to see her go. (One of the reasons the people must have been unhappy was the inconvenience they would go through replacing their pictures of the royal couple that they were required to hang in their offices, shops, restaurants, and shoe repair shacks.) Farah's good fortune to produce sons made her secure. Her redone face made her position safer and more secure and also made her a trendsetter. She was round-faced, soft, attractive Persian woman before the surgeons got her. After her operations she had prominent cheekbones, sunken cheeks, and a fuller chin, a face that was a worthy successor to Soraya's. She also lost incredible amounts of weight, thereby accentuating her height. Farah now looks quite the modern lady, the Jacqueline Onassis of Iran.

The dating scene in Iran is bizarre. Marriages are not so formally arranged as they once were, but it is still possible for a woman to know who her husband is going to be by the time she is ten. Marriage bet-



ween first cousins is common. You might say that Iranians believe strongly in the philosophy that common backgrounds lead to good marriages. How do people getting married learn about each other before they are married? If they happen to be first cousins there is no problem since they have probably seen each other almost every day since the day they were born. Even modern Persians live close to their relatives if they can. If the couple comes from an old-fashioned family, they may go out together after they are married. Quite often, the couple does not have enough money to make a home of their own by the time their parents give them permission to be married. The Iranian solution is this: get married first, live together later. 'Later' is a year or two. In that interim period, money can be saved, a house or apartment found, furniture built, cooking lessons learned. Also in that period, the couple can go to the movies together, have dinner out, attend a party or reception with a clear mind and a free heart. No one can gossip about the respectability of the lady. In other words, unmarried girls do not go out unless they want to ruin their reputations and make themselves unmarriageable. They never, never move out of their parent's home and take apartments of their own. It does not matter if they have grown up, finished school, and taken full-time jobs, nor does it matter if that full-time job is an hour's commute away. She stays at home until she is married away. The gossip of neighbours is as palpable a thing as the polluted air of Tehran. Iranians don't believe in living together before marriage, there are no 'trial periods' in Iran. It is rumoured, however, that after a woman is married, she no longer has such stringent rules to follow. Once the hymen is broken in wedlock, anything goes. Appearances are still on, but the *chador* is definitely off.

In rural Iran and in the more traditional, southern part of the capital, the *chador* covers the face from the bridge of the nose down, leaving unveiled only the eyes (sometimes eye-slits are cut out of a full-face veil). But as you go north to the westernized part of the city, you notice increasingly that the entire face more often than not is exposed. The chin may be covered when a *chador* is carrying a sack of groceries and/or a child and she is keeping her *chador* in place with her teeth.

This article is based on my observations and experiences while I was living and teaching in Tehran, Iran last year. Recently I condensed and organized a 700-page transcript of tape recordings into a 168-page auto-biography entitled 'There's Nothing I Own That I Want' by Harrisene Jackson (Prentice-Hall), which was reviewed in the May 1976 issue of MS.

—Linda Bearman Hamalian





# SCENES FROM TWO FESTIVALS

HOLLY NEAR-MEG CHRISTIAN

This past summer saw two music festivals produced by our American sisters, one in Champaign, Illinois and one in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. I attended the Third National Women's Music Festival in Champaign and found it to be an incredible experience.

There were first-rate performances by both professional and amateur musicians and workshops ranging from 'how to play the banjo' to 'revolutionary culture'. Women danced, sang, played instruments, clapped their hands, rolled on the grass, played frisbee. In the campgrounds, we swam, sang and drank around campfires all night, and met sisters from all over the U.S. and Canada.

The organizers of the festival made an effort to attract many diverse performers. There were working-class women singing working-class blues, socialist organizers, lesbian-feminists, rock and roll singers, folkies, classical musicians, blueswomen, students. Canada was represented by Angele Arsenault (see interview) and April Kassirer and Carol T. Rowe, two very talented musicians from Toronto. There were a few problems: One major argument over whether or not to ask men to leave the concerts, some conflict between gay and straight women, some discussion about the focus of the conference re: women's culture vs. socialism.

I feel music festivals of this nature are very important—they give us an opportunity to meet, they provide some emotional release from the pressure of our working lives. The same problems that the women's movement always encounters crop up, but we also learn more about the commonality of our struggle. I hope Ontario will have one soon.

—Ruth Dworin



Sherri Coleman



Sherri Coleman

THERESA TRULL



Sherri Coleman



APRIL AND CAROL



Sherri Coleman

NY CLEMENS

Irka Huzyk



KAY GARDNER



Irka Huzyk



Irka Huzyk



Sherri Coleman



# WOMEN IN ARGENTINE PRISONS

The political situation in Argentina has been deteriorating during the past few years, and in recent months incidents of imprisonment and torture have greatly increased. Isabel Peron was legally elected as President of the Republic on July 1, 1974 following the death of her husband, Juan. Under her rule, Argentines suffered from political repression and their lives were marked by many of the same horrors Chileans are experiencing under the Pinochet regime, including imprisonment for political activities and execution by right wing murder squads.

The Argentine military coup of March 24, 1976, and the installation of General Jorge Videla as President of the Republic, set the stage for the ensuing escalated repression against the broadest sections of the Argentine people by the Government, Argentine Armed Forces and police. Cultural repression and press censorship have been two of the immediately visible manifestations of the regime's insidious campaign to abolish freedom of speech and to eradicate the burgeoning organization of the independent labour movement.

The regime moved expeditiously in the firing of hundreds of university and high school teachers and staff and in the hiring of professionals who are sympathetic to its policies, and simultaneously placing the content and financing of the educational programmes under its authority.

One month following the coup, the regime issued a statement prohibiting the transmittal of all news other than that furnished by its press secretary. In addition, it was declared that all presses were forbidden to inform, directly or indirectly, on any subversive activities.

In its operations to attack the labour solidarity the regime declared all strikes illegal and punishable by imprisonment of up to ten years, banned all labour unions, appointed itself arbitrator in all labour conflicts and replaced union leaders with regime military officers.

The widespread political repression in Argentina had been intensified by the regime's voiding of a constitutional clause which allows individuals arrested for violation of state of siege regulations to opt for voluntary exile. The regime's issuance of a new 'Public Security Law' on the day of the coup established a network of military tribunals, set in operation the death penalty and lowered to the age of 16 those punishable for political crimes. Amnesty International estimates that there are between 15,000 and 30,000 prisoners, while an Argentine refugee organization located in Mexico approximates the figure at 20,000.

Prison conditions in Argentina have worsened since the regime removed prison guards and employed Army and gendarmerie personnel who have consistently adhered to the administering of harsh measures which foster the generation of a state of terror both inside and outside the prisons. The increasing prohibition of visits by family, friends and lawyers, as well as the holding of prisoners incommunicado for extremely long periods, are part of the regime's overt practicing of psychological deprivation perpetrated on the prisoners.

## FILTH AND FAMINE

Throughout the country there are women and children (I have no information as to approximate figures) imprisoned in some of the most inhumane and uninhabitable structures, and deprived of the basic necessities of life. One of these institutions, Villa Devoto, located in Buenos Aires, is a depressing example of the regime's tactics to strip individuals, in this case women, of human dignity and place their lives in constant jeopardy in the most unhygienic envi-

ronment one can imagine.

Mothers and their 15 babies, ranging in age from one month to 24 months, are living in one cell area, and are only allowed to enter an outside patio for one hour per day. There are no special accommodations for the babies' diets, and after the coup mothers were informed that shortly their babies would be taken away from them and placed in the nursery. The unhygienic surroundings, rats, cockroaches and infectious insects everywhere - aggravated by the nutri-



tional deficiencies of the meals and the lack of medical attention, have caused many women and children to suffer from chronic diarrhea, vomiting, infections, fever and malnutrition.

In another area of Villa Devoto prison, 25 women and 19 children were inhabiting a cell area where raw sewage was leaking through the ceiling cracks as a result of a heavy rainfall. The electricity was cut off, and the women and children were forced to remain in their beds.

The prison officials then promised to disinfect the cell, thus moving them to a 15 foot by 30 foot cell. Subsequently, the mothers were moved to another building area of the prison, separating them from part of the children. After 165 hours and much verbal persistence, they were transferred back to the original cell.

Upon entering the cell it became readily evident that the events of the preceding few days were an operation to humiliate the women and children, and that the prison officials had no intention of cleaning the cell at that time. Instead, they had taken all the prisoners' personal belongings: clothes, utensils, bedding, etc. and heaped them in a

corner mixed with the human excrement, mud and infectious insects which infest raw sewage.

Finally, prison officials promised to come and disinfect the cell, after the women and children had been robbed of their personal effects. They waited in the patio area during the cleaning process, and then were ordered by Maria del Carmen Mieres, a prison assistant, to reenter even though the disinfectant fumes were toxic and the floor was very slippery. A pregnant woman injured her head and ribs when she fell on the slippery floor.

## ABDUCTION

Rosa Molina de Sandoval, a 55 year-old woman and mother of five, was taken prisoner along with her eldest daughter on March 18, 1975 in Bajo Flores. Although this incident took place before the coup, it points up to the prevalence of political repression that was mounting under Isabel Peron's rule.

Rosa Molina was a domestic worker and craftsman as well as a diligent helper in her husband's heavy work. She assisted in the construction of a primary school in her village. Police entered her home on March 18, and at gunpoint abducted her and her daughter. They were subjected to several periods of intense interrogation and tortured by the application of electricity all over their bodies while they were held at Police Headquarters.

Rosa Molina had been operated on for breast cancer, and the burns she suffered from the electrical torture techniques were amplified due to her debilitated condition. She was transferred to Villa Devoto and denied medical attention except for being administered tranquilizers.

The following are some examples of the physical condition of the women incarcerated at Villa Devoto:

- 1) Beatriz Serreno: suffering from hepatic problems. Does not receive medication or an adequate diet.
- 2) Maria del Carmen Peralta: suffering from anemia, affected by paralysis and does not receive treatment.
- 3) Graciela Chein: suffering from vesicle and intestinal problems for months. She was not given the results of her blood tests, nor were X-rays taken. She has low blood pressure and faints frequently.
- 4) Violeta Nunez: suffering from post-partum vaginal fissures which were reopened due to an abortion produced during torture. She urgently needs medical care.
- 5) Maria Ines Britos: suffering from pulmonary emphysema. They didn't complete inhalation therapy or give her the results of analysis. Her diet is inadequate.

These are only a few examples of how the regime is proceeding to assassinate women by denying them the urgent med-

ical attention they need most desperately.

## HANDCUFFED HORRORS

In Cordoba's penitentiary pregnant women about to deliver are subjected to the most degrading treatment at the hands of police and prison officials. During the last minutes of labour, the women are taken handcuffed to the hospital in the custody of female and male police and Army personnel. Armed guards stand around during the delivery verbally abusing and pawing the women.

The Cordoba prison officials administer some of the most grotesque torture methods to women: the fracturing of ribs, crushing of the chest and asphyxiation; puncturing of all parts of the body with knives; gouging out eyes and cutting off fingers. In this prison no visitors have been allowed since the coup, and prisoners receive food only every three days.

The military headquarters of the Videla regime have set up concentration camps where more innocent people are incarcerated. Many of these people have been included in the numbers of 'disappeared' individuals. Often they are executed, officials using the excuse that they tried to escape.

The majority of the thousands of women and men who have been arrested since the coup have not been recognized by the Argentine government as prisoners. Not only does this lack of information contribute to the atmosphere of terror but also, it endangers the lives of the prisoners who may be executed at any moment.

In a recent press conference, the Argentine Minister of the Interior was forced to admit that the government has received thousands of protest letters and telegrams from all over the world. He attributed his influx of mail to the influence that 'subversive elements' have on people outside and inside Argentina.

To continue to put international pressure on the military regime in Argentina, you are urged to send letters and telegrams to: General Jorge Videla, President of the Republic, CASA ROSADA, Buenos Aires, Argentina. With copies to: Brigadier Julio Gomez, Minister of Justice, Ministerio de Justicia, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Ambassador Aronondo Musich, Embassy of Argentina, 1600 New Hampshire Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 2003.

And to aid in the dissemination of information, contact: Solidarity Committee with the Argentine People (SCAP), P.O. Box 4388, Berkeley, California 94704 (415) 548-7615.

—Information from Outreach, Bulletin SCAP and from Solidarity International  
—By Jan

Reprinted from Off Our Backs

Olga Talamante, falsely accused of subversion and tortured during her 16 month prison ordeal, was released from jail and expelled from Argentina at the end of March. Reunited with her family in California, Talamante recounted details of workers' lives which she had gone to Argentina to study, and details also of the brutal treatment of prisoners. Her mother told how she and her daughter had grown closer during their separation. Mrs. Talamante learned to share Olga's convictions as she walked picket lines in front of the Argentine Embassy and experienced the coldness of the U.S. State Department. 'Before, I asked myself why does a person suffer so much, bear so much. And now I have found the answer, because the more one suffers, the more one struggles; and then the less one suffers. This I have learned from my daughter.' (N.Y. Guardian)

## CANADA GIVES ARGENTINA THE BOMB

The Canadian government has concluded a contract with the government of Argentina for the sale of a Canadian-produced Candu nuclear reactor to that country.

Organizations and governments as diverse as the Vatican, Amnesty International, the U.S. government, and the Israeli and West German governments, have in recent months protested the violations of human rights of Argentine citizens and foreigners living in Argentina. It is most distressing, therefore, to learn that the Argentine military regime has been found sufficiently trustworthy by the Canadian Government to be the second country in the world to purchase Candu nuclear technology.

Canada is a signatory of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and as such it has the obligation to consider the kinds of governments it intends to sell nuclear power to.

The record of the Videla government in Argentina warrants a reevaluation of the contract and its suspension until human rights and democratic liberties are restored in Argentina. The Trudeau government should not be allowed to pass off this sale as simply a 'trade arrangement', especially in view of its own statement after the India nuclear sale experience. At this time, the realization of this questionable sale depends on the response of Canadians inside and outside government.



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# FEMINIST DOCTOR DISCUSSES BIRTH CONTROL

KIRSTEN EMMOT

I would like to comment on the articles on birth control in the December-January issue of *The Other Woman*.

I was most interested in the Ruth Dworin article, 'My Horror Story'. Such articles have considerable value in warning women not to allow overenthusiastic proponents of some method or other to brush off our questions. However, it contains inaccuracies.

It is not true that 15 per cent of women got infections from Dalkon Shields. They were removed from the market because of septic abortions, not ordinary infections (the so-called pelvic inflammatory disease) and at the time they were banned, only four deaths had occurred out of several hundred thousand insertions. Naturally, this is four too many. However, let us keep it in perspective. Other infections with IUD's make the situation worse, but they have not caused the present epidemic. Other infections with IUDs tend to be caused by gonorrhea.

I wonder how many women Dworin has talked to if every one of them has a birth control horror story to tell. I see many women in my work as a G.P. who use one method or another without incident for year after year. Horror stories abound, but they are NOT universal.

Fibrous cystic disease (not cystic disease) is not a very common side effect of the Pill. In fact, it is now thought that the Pill users have less of this condition.

Birth control articles are full of statistics for a very good reason. Individual testimonials about any drug are of no value. You can get enthusiastic testimonials about absolutely anything: herbs, christian science, Kathryn Kuhlman, Krebiozen, meditation, brown paper poultices, drinking hog urine, you name it. You can also get horror stories vigorously condemning everything. People have gotten perforated peptic ulcers and died from taking aspirins. The only way of assessing any drug, treatment or regimen is statistics. How many people are helped? How many harmed? Then a woman contemplating the drug or treatment can decide whether the risks outweigh the benefits.

As for the history of birth control: It might have been worthwhile to include some stuff from the Family Planning Handbook for Doctors, published by the International Planned Parenthood Federation in London, England. For instance, did you know that the first scholarly report of a practical IUD came out in 1909? Grafenberg did quite a bit of work in the late 1920's, and articles presenting experience with many thousands of women came out in 1959. The first international scientific conference on IUDs took place in 1962. IUDs are not quite as experimental as everyone thinks.

IUDs could very occasionally, it appears, cause babies to be deformed—three deformities have recently come to light where the babies had missing bones and fingers. All the mother had been wearing copper IUDs. Bear in mind that in any case women are strongly recommended to have an abortion if they become pregnant wearing an IUD because of the risk of complications.

(from *Women's Report, Britain*)

I disagree that family planning professionals pretend that birth control 'has somehow become magically safe and effective totally.' No comprehensive texts and pamphlets are packed with pages of side effects and contraindications. It is the individual doctors, nurses and family planning workers who take the Pollyanna attitude and fail to inform women of all the facts.



A firm in Atlanta, Georgia, held that pregnant women must stop work when their condition became 'conspicuous'—the test being their ability to stand facing a wall with only nose and toes touching it. The rule was cancelled when it was found five male executives could not pass.

(from *Women's Report, Britain*.)

Of what value is it to describe the introduction of bacteria into the uterus by an IUD, and connect it with serious PID with the vague term, 'sometimes'? Sometimes people get run over going across the street. Why not tell women exactly how often the mere act of introducing a foreign body into the uterus causes an infection that the organ cannot clear? The statistics I have to hand give a figure: 2 per cent. Of these, about one quarter can be called severe. Women contemplating these figures should know that a proportion of all these infections can be traced to gonorrhea and you can get severe PID from gonorrhea without an IUD.

It is not true that the pill pregnancy rate is 5 per cent. The real rate is one tenth of one per cent. I would like to know where you got the figure of 5 per cent. I suspect that all these failures were in women who failed to take their pills regularly. Of what value is testing a method by counting those who did not use it? The effectiveness of the Pill depends very strongly on the motivation of the user.

To say that 'now time has passed . . . the relative safety of these preparations has been widely studied and measured' is not a vast understatement. It is the truth. What you probably wished to say is that the studies have not been conclusive enough.

I fail to see the connection between the medical profession and the purveyors of insulting vulvar (not vaginal) sprays. Vulvar sprays are cosmetics. The medical profession had nothing to do with them: they were dreamed up by advertising men. I notice the advertising for these useless concoctions has almost died away. There is nothing uniquely dangerous about genital deodorants. These chemicals are widely used in many cosmetics and deodorants (or were before hexachlorophene became a prescription item) and all chemicals should of course be kept out of the reach of children. A pill for men would not be 'simpler to invent' than the pill for

women. The difficulties are just the same: how can you target an oral chemical to the sex cell producing organ in the body? Since we all object to having our bodies used to test new drugs, are we willing to have our men take the same risks?

Certainly birth control for men would enable us to shift the burden of morbidity, mortality and inconvenience to their shoulders. It would also mean putting our power to control our own fertility in the hands of men. Is this what we want?

As a side comment, I do not feel it is realistic to demand a drug without any side effect for either sex. There is no known drug, no known operation, no known treatment of any kind designed to interfere with body processes which is totally without side effects. It is well known that dozens of unpleasant side effects can be produced by plain sugar pills containing no drug at all. Nor is there anything bizarre about the Pill side effects. Hundreds of drugs affect liver function, cause headaches, upset stomachs, affect diabetes, cause cancer, make people depressed and cause weight gain or loss. Once again, the question is one of benefits weighed against risks. You are quite right that the only sure way of avoiding any sort of contraceptive side effect is abstaining from heterosexual sex.

A word about menstrual extraction. A recent article about Karman, the inventor, revealed that this procedure can be damned painful. You would be crazy to risk the introduction of infection into the uterus every month: the extraction would have to be done with the usual sterile precautions, probably at large centres or clinics. This does not strike me as much of a convenience for the sexually active woman.

Abortion where I live, in Victoria B.C., is available practically on demand. You do not have to 'prove' that the abortion will damage your health. The doctor sends a letter to the abortion committee, usually only a few sentences long. No moral judgements are passed. The criminal code demands that he do this referral to the committee. No patient of mine has been refused.

It is untrue to say that 'many' doctors use formulas of age times number of children, and the like, to determine eligibility for sterilization. This is now very rare. Most sterilizations are done for women who have had only one or two children. The only criterion here is, does the woman want any more? Is she quite unlikely to change her mind? Remember, every experienced gynecologist has witnessed the heartbreak of the sterilized woman who very much wants her fertility back. Naturally, they want to be sure you won't be back in two years demanding to know "why did you sterilize me? You should have known better."

Now about Volume 4, Issue 2: Judith Dwyer wrote that she could not understand why natural birth books didn't put a lot of stuff about breech births in but advised women to consult doctors. It's quite simple: the death rate for babies born breech is about 15 per cent. Yes, ma'am. True, two thirds of these were preemies; however, the usual story in the other cases is that the child's body is born up to the neck and the head remains stuck in the pelvis. A home birth is not the place to suddenly discover that the pelvis is too small and you cannot get the head out and the minutes are ticking by. This situation happened to me not long ago in hospital. The only reason the child is alive now is that an obstetrician was at my elbow with a pair of Piper

—continued on page 22

## GAY NEWS

In Sweden, a government commission has recommended that the age of sexual consent be lowered from 15 to 14 and that all special reference to homosexual acts be eliminated so that there would no longer be a distinction in law between homosexual and heterosexual acts. (from *Women's Report, Britain*)

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# FEMINIST STEPS ON QUEENS FOOT

We featured Cathy Wedge, feminist and horsewoman, in our last issue. Cathy came second on the Canadian Equestrian team. While travelling through western Canada, two tow members had the opportunity to meet with Cathy again, as well as her mother. Below is Cathy's story of the Olympics and how she views feminism. We are sure that both Cathy and tow have fond memories of each other.

**WELL, YOU HAVE JUST COME BACK FROM THE OLYMPICS, CATHY. HOW DO YOU FEEL NOW?**

I guess, on a personal level, I found the Olympics very gratifying because of the positive attitudes our coaches have, particularly about the performances of the women on the team, and that's always nice. We are in a sport in which people often say, it's a man's sport, and so when you can vindicate whatever your own beliefs are, it's always nice when things work out that way. Obviously, it's even nicer if everyone does a good job and I think, basically, the team made a good showing. With a little luck, we would have made a lot better showing. But it certainly wasn't a disgrace.

In the past 3 Olympics, we haven't even finished a team. To finish everyone in really good style was just a real step forward. It is certainly going to help the sport in Canada. It might encourage other women to compete at the advanced level. You have scores of women who are eventing in the preliminary, and even in the intermediate, and you just wonder what happened to them all. The group that gets to the advanced seems to consist of men. So when they see that half of the team this time consisted of women they start to think, well, maybe we've been too influenced by the prevailing attitude.

**IS IT TRUE TO SAY THAT THIS TEAM HAD A BETTER SHOWING WITH THE WOMEN THAN THE MEN?**

Well, I would hate to be quoted on that but it was very definitely the case. Juliette had the highest standing and I

Possibly. That would be one more factor but I think it is the whole approach. I don't think it has so much to do with competitiveness as the whole approach toward riding an event horse. I think we're really misguided saying it takes toughness...it takes tough-mindedness and I look at tough-mindedness as a positive thing. It doesn't take toughness.

**SO MANY GOOD RIDERS FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES KNOCKED OVER SO MANY THINGS. THEY MUST HAVE BEEN GOOD TO GET THERE IN THE FIRST PLACE.**

True, but you have to remember that they are Olympic riders undergoing an Olympic test. The test itself is the hardest thing you are going to ever encounter. The conditions were far from ideal as well. In the individual jumping, the course was monstrous. I have never seen a course that big. Secondly, in the team competition, the footing was very bad. The arena was very small so you had horses jumping fences without really enough room to be galloping and jumping properly and, with the footing being as bad as it was, the horses didn't have the confidence to go in and jump aggressively. They were jumping on the defensive, instead of on the offensive. So it really wasn't that most of the horses or riders weren't good. But they were undergoing a severe test under abnormal conditions.

**YOU WERE TALKING TO US BEFORE ABOUT HOW YOU HAD A CHANCE TO HAVE DINNER WITH THE QUEEN. THAT WAS AN INTERESTING STORY.**

It was, particularly talking to the Queen about everything from pig farming in Western Canada to feminism. She's basically a very sensitive, aware person. Amazingly sensitive and forward-thinking for someone whose life depends on tradition and she seemed to feel very much that a woman because she is constantly thrust upon men to be the adaptive one of the two, has to constantly adapt to her spouse. It gives a woman an added strength and



Vicki Walsh

Cathy takes the water jump—the most difficult jump on the course.

person. She doesn't wear a lot of makeup. I was surprised at how small she is.

**WAS IT INTERESTING COMPETING AGAINST A MEMBER OF THE ROYAL FAMILY?**

No more interesting than it is to do anything. She has a lovely horse, she's an experienced rider, and it was good to ride against the British team in general. I certainly felt no different competing against Princess Anne.

**DO YOU HAVE FUTURE PLANS WITH YOUR RIDING?**

I'll be doing some teaching, doing riding clinics. I wouldn't do it professionally because I only like teaching people who I feel are really benefitting from it. I don't feel badly about taking their money. My horses are resting this winter but I'll ride other horses. We'll start again next spring because there are three competitions next year. Ideally, I should be riding full time if I was thinking seriously of winning the world championships but, financially, it is not feasible. Although I want to do very well, there are some other things that I want to do and I sometimes find that doing nothing but riding can be a rather restrictive thing. In that sense, riding does not mean that much to me. It means a great deal to me, probably more than anything else, but partly because it leads me to other things...I wouldn't have been in Toronto, I wouldn't have met *The Other Woman*, I wouldn't have gone to the women's coffeehouse if it hadn't been for my riding.

**WHAT ARE YOU DOING AT UNIVERSITY NOW?**

I can tell you about the University. The English Department, for example, nineteenth of the people don't know I ride horses or, if they do, it doesn't impress them. They just think...why isn't she spending more time at school? I'm always having to meet them on their terms and having to test myself whereas I don't find I have to test myself as much every time I compete in terms of dealing with people. Often I just become socially lazy.

I finished my course work toward my masters degree in English but I haven't finished my thesis. I'll also be learning another language this year.

**WHAT IS YOUR THESIS ON?**

It's on contemporary American poets and in particular, the poetry of Ann Sexton. It's to do with women's consciousness, particularly in the literary field, and

how critics have treated women. I have been very influenced by Mary Ellman's book, *Thinking About Women*, and her observations. I emphasize Ann Sexton's dealing with the dilemma of being a woman, an artist in patriarchal society in which she has to deal with the kinds of attitudes and criticism because I feel critics have a lot to do with the artist and how the artist produces. When she is examining her dilemma, she is not examining just her dilemma and that is one thing that she certainly understood. That is the dilemma of 99 per cent of all women who begin to realize that the patriarchy is not the answer. I think Ann Sexton was a more interesting poet than any of the others partly because of her examining of the mother-daughter dilemma, which has to be one of the seminal interests of all feminists. Her attitudes as a mother, her perception as a mother, are incredible.

**DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT THE MOTHER-DAUGHTER DILEMMA?**

In her collection, *Transformations*, she takes the Grimm's fairy tales and transforms them and shows how we are, in fact, conditioned even as very small children when we are listening to these kinds of fairy tales...the princess waits in the tower to be saved by the prince, or the man involved is always the one going out and doing the exciting deed.

In Rapunsel, the witch that puts Rapunsel in the tower is hooked into the syndrome that plagues the mother-daughter relationship. She sees the inherent dangers in the world but is only adding to the problems by trying to save the child from some of the inherent dangers. It begins saying *A woman who loves a woman is forever young*. Then she goes on to show that this is an ironic statement. What many mothers do is try to maintain their youth through their daughters. Now why would mothers ever be put in that situation? Why would any mother ever feel the need to be made young through her daughter? Why can't she feel her own inherent worth? Why does she have to see it through her daughter? Well, because women are never given the kind of opportunity to fulfill their own potential. So they have to try to live it vicariously through their children. And she's showing that this whole Rapunsel is the archetypal myth of the woman in the tower, of the woman trying to keep her daughter from the real, harsh reality. But what happens when the daughter finds that she simply can't deal with it any better than her mother has done?

—continued on next page



Cathy and City Fella come in second place on Canadian team.

have the second highest. The facts are there—Juliette and I were one and two. I think that's very nice. In terms of my feelings about the sport and my politics, it's a very positive thing. If again we get the kinds of arguments that we got this time, all we have to do is look at the records.

**DO YOU THINK THE WOMEN HAD A MORE COMPETITIVE ATTITUDE THAN THE MEN?**

I would avoid the term competitive. Although we were competing, I do not like the idea of the competitive person. I like to think more in terms of determination.

**THE WOMEN WOULD WANT TO SHOW THEMSELVES TO BE BETTER THAN THE MEN?**

versatility that men simply never have to cultivate. Her observation is that men are basically rigid because they have never had to test their flexibility.

**HOW DID YOU MEET THE QUEEN?**

I was talking to the Royal Equerry. Some people walked by. I moved out of the way and I backed up and stepped on the Queen's foot. So, in my usual graceful style, this is how I met the Queen, the Queen.

**DID YOU RECOGNIZE HER AT FIRST?**

No. She is much less imposing than I had imagined. She had on a very simple, ordinary short dress and is a very simple

Vicki Walsh



## TALKING WITH JUDGE WEDGE

**AS CATHY'S MOTHER, YOU ARE ALSO JUDGE WEDGE. ARE YOU CALLED A JUDGE OR A MAGISTRATE?**

I am a Judge of the Magistrate's Court in Saskatchewan. Now that would be comparable in Ontario to a Provincial Court judge.

**WHAT KIND OF CASES WOULD YOU HANDLE AS A MAGISTRATE?**

Magistrates in Saskatchewan handle 90 per cent of the cases that come before any lower court. I handle some family court work. We don't have a family court division in Saskatchewan. All of the 30 provincial judges have jurisdiction over everything that a magistrate has jurisdiction over. Each time they amend the Code they add to the Election section whereby you are elected by a judge of the Magistrate's Court.

**WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO HANDLE DIVORCE CASES?**

No, I couldn't. Divorce is a special section of the B.N.A. Act and that can only be handled by a Federal judge. The Supreme Bench in Saskatchewan handles all the divorces. Family jurisdiction is certainly fragmented. The Queen's Bench handles divorce, the district court which is also a federally appointed court handles custody matters and I handle what we call protection cases. That's when the Department of Social Services makes application to have the child committed to a ministry of social services because of child neglect, abuse and many other reasons. I also handle juvenile court and, in Saskatchewan, a child is a juvenile until he or she is 16. It's different in some provinces. I also do two days of small claims and that's civil jurisdiction. Usually lawyers don't appear in that court. I do a night traffic court and also a criminal court. I go to Outlook every second Monday—that's a small town 80 miles away. I do everything there. I really have a variety of cases.

**HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A MAGISTRATE?**

I was appointed about four years ago.

**WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BECOME A LAWYER?**

It was a family affair to start with. My father was a lawyer and now a retired judge. My husband was a lawyer. I had planned on going into school when I finished my arts but I decided to get married and have children instead. I finished my arts degree and was married in August. That was what I wanted to do at that time. I had four children then. In the back of my mind was the thought that I had better get busy and finish that law degree. Finally, when David, who at that time was the youngest, was 6 years old, Jim said, 'Stop talking and do it or keep quiet'.

**SO, IN THE FAMILY, THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN ENCOURAGEMENT THAT WOMEN CAN DO THINGS?**

I don't think there was anything conscious that a woman can do things. I have no consciousness at all of that except I really knew what I wanted. There were no obstacles, I had a very easy time. I had no obstacles to overcome as far as my husband was concerned. Jim walked to work and I took the car to university. I had a babysitter. Mind you, in my third year, I was going to quit every Friday because my babysitters were always quitting and the children were having measles or chicken-pox. My oldest is 30 now.

**I GUESS WITH THAT KIND OF DETERMINATION TO WANT TO FINISH SOMETHING THAT IT WOULD NATURALLY FLOW TO THE CHILDREN AS WELL, AND THAT CATHY WOULD PICK THAT UP.**

I don't know. Maybe you're the psychiatrist. All my children are very different. They've all done well in his or her chosen field. Cathy certainly is a determined young woman but so are the others.

**A LOT OF TIMES A PROFESSIONAL WOMAN WILL ACT AS A ROLE MODEL FOR OTHERS.**

Perhaps, yes. I didn't think of that consciously. People did remark to me after I had graduated that they thought it was great. I remember one girl who worked in the law library finally took law. When I was in law, there weren't many women. In my first year, there was one other woman. She dropped out at the end of first year. Second year, there was no other. Now there are a good many.

**DID YOU FIND IT A DIFFICULT POSITION TO BE ONE OF THE VERY FEW WOMEN IN LAW SCHOOL?**

No, I was older than most of the boys. I didn't try and pal around with them. There were some who were approaching my age, in their thirties. They probably thought of me as mother. In fact, some of them called me that. If I had been younger, perhaps it would have been different.

**CATHY'S HAD A LOT OF 'OBSTACLES' TO JUMP. HOW HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF HER CAREER SO FAR?**

I'm very pleased with what she's done. She's a good student. Riding is a very expensive proposition. We were always able to help her. So were her grandparents. She has had help from many other people so it wasn't as if she had nothing but it's not the kind of business that anyone with an ordinary income can afford to get into. She had help from lots of people from across Canada.

**SHE'S BEEN AWAY FROM SASKATOON FOR QUITE A WHILE, GOING TO VARIOUS PLACES FOR TEAM TRIALS.**

Off and on, Europe and South America. She went away first when she was 17, down to Seattle to work in a stable after she had finished grade 12, and came back after the summer and asked if she could stay. I wouldn't want to spend all winter working in a stable. She did get some lessons for her work. Then she went to university here.

**DO YOU FIND A LOT OF PRESSURE IN COURT?**

Yes. There are pressures, of course with decisions. Some of the decisions certainly affect other people's lives so directly. It is a responsibility. I certainly worry before I sentence anyone.

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THINGS CHANGED?**

Yes, indeed. But what in particular.

**LAWS THAT DIRECTLY CONCERN FAMILY COURT?**

We have been trying to get a family court in Saskatchewan for a good many years. The fragmented jurisdiction in the family court alone is enough to cause a good many problems. It may require an amendment to the B.N.A. Act and you may be aware of the problems involved in that.

-continued from page 16 -

**IS THERE ANYTHING ABOUT THAT THAT YOU WOULD FIND USEFUL TO SAY ABOUT YOU AND YOUR MOTHER?**

In a way, my mother's experiences were a little unique. My father nearly died when I was in second grade. My mother had four children then. When he got better, she decided that it simply wasn't fair that she be put in that dependent role so she decided to go back to law school. From the time I was 8 years old, I recognized that my mother was not a sandwich machine, that she was a person with her own ability, hopes, ambitions and her own life. So we had to be quiet while mother was studying. We couldn't run to her every time we fell down and scraped our knee. We always knew that there was a time in the day when we could go to her so we weren't really deprived as children. She always had time for us. We simply couldn't go only at our convenience. We had to think when it was convenient for her, as well. That taught us that mothers are not something to be taken for granted, that they, too, are people.

It also was a role model for me. There was my mother being a mother and a 'housewife' but also being a student and eventually practicing law. So, in that sense, my mother has avoided falling into the trap of trying to live through her children. Fathers don't put those kinds of adverse pressures on children. Women have very little else to focus their energy on but their children and that, of course, puts all kinds of adverse pressure on the children themselves. When the mother has an occupation of her own, she is never putting those kinds of pressures on the children. I know how incredibly complicated is the mother-daughter relationship.

**'There are many feminists who don't live their feminist beliefs'.**

I think that there are many feminists who don't quite live their feminist beliefs by not in many ways appreciating the kinds of things mothers have had to deal with, and have avoided treating their mothers like people I think that's partly understandable because anybody on the block will be closer to my children than I am because of that emotional bond. It is so close that instead of dealing with my problem rationally she is going to say... what have I done to create this problem, in what way am I responsible? You have a real barrier because you're almost too close, which I think is partly alleviated when both the mother and the daughter are interested in their own things. Then I think you can be more objective about various problems that crop up. I find myself having to occasionally set aside specific times to not let months and months go by without really sitting down and talking to my mother. It's just too easy to take a mother for granted. I do it all the time and I have to fight that. You are giving all your negative energy to your mother because you know that she will accept you and still love you for it and you give all your positive energy to other people. They

**ARE YOU ABLE TO WRITE BRIEFS TO CHANGE LAWS THAT DON'T BENEFIT SOCIETY?**

Well, we make recommendations but we don't write them up. There certainly are going to be changes in women's property law across the country, as you know, it all takes time.

**DO YOU THINK ANY OTHERS IN THE FAMILY WILL WANT TO TAKE UP LAW?**

My youngest son is articling in Kelowna. My youngest daughter, I don't know what she's going to do.

**SHE MAY END UP BEING A RIDER.**

Perhaps. But one's enough. I'll give



wouldn't have the time of day for you if you laid the kind of trips on them that you lay on your own mother. It's a matter of seeing her as a person in her own right. I think you should always give mothers the opportunity to look into your own life. Sometimes that's all they want.

**YOU WERE TELLING US ABOUT A CHRISTMAS GIFT YOU HAD GIVEN YOUR MOTHER. COULD YOU DESCRIBE THIS?**

At times, mother and I came to loggerheads over my feminism. I kept telling her that she had been my role model and was really the one that had raised my consciousness. This, in itself, had made her a little uncomfortable. But at times I think she liked hearing that, as long as I wasn't being too radical that day. In order to show her that I was thinking about her, I made up a stocking. Here's mother playing Santa Claus for us all these years and no one ever thought about playing Santa Claus back. I put feminist tin foil symbols all over the outside. I got catalogues from the Vancouver Women's Bookstore, a brass women's symbol and all kinds of buttons (I Am An Amazon, I Like Older Women). I wrapped them all individually, about ten of them, so she had to open each one. A couple of books and a Rita MacNeil record. She opened it Christmas Eve when the family was there. She just killed herself laughing. She thought it was marvellous. I gave her the women's calendar and put inside... my mother is the greatest feminist I know. Put in those terms it somehow breaks down her defensiveness or negativity about my own lifestyle. She sees that I am not being judgemental. I am saying that I appreciate what you are. You have to work at communication like that. Sometimes I have found it very difficult. She took all the buttons—I Like Older Women—and wore it on her that Christmas Eve. Any person enjoys being recognized.

her some encouragement but she'll do what she wants. They've all done what they wanted.

**DO YOU WANT TO ADD TO OUR PRAISES OF CATHY?**

I think she's great. I think all my children are great. Most mothers do. I do admire her courage, especially after last year. She came home completely exhausted. She broke her ankle in Toronto before Munich.

**WERE YOU ABLE TO BE IN MONTREAL?**

I could have been. I went to Virginia for two weeks in June to see the final trials. I decided it was really nice here, with my colour T.V.



# Poetry

## the flight

by  
Karen Hood

earth  
to the  
in a dome  
that descend  
shooting stars  
dozens of  
exploding into  
fireworks  
we burst-  
then

rising  
of the  
with the rush  
your face flushed  
for now  
and clean  
your eyes clear  
I look at you

sky  
of the  
to the roof  
and fly  
our arms  
we stretch  
highs as a sigh  
floating

moist moss  
like touching  
feels  
fine fleshy  
feels  
clouds of

air  
and breaths of  
and breaths  
breaths  
of air  
on a rush  
rising slowly  
we took flight  
Together

abandon  
with the  
wild  
into the wind  
then we race

of it  
with the heat  
and I tremble  
throbbing  
pulsing  
body  
I feel my  
naked  
like swimming  
such slipperiness

night  
the black  
and ride  
almost agony  
with the  
we arch  
the ache  
ahh .

## anger

the anger is gone  
already soothed by quiet words turned  
inside out  
tempered  
before it could threaten

at sunrise  
screaming for the drifting night  
to become morning  
it was tricked by an illusion  
and learning  
to believe in needed lies  
became another  
endless  
murmur  
over coffee

Rosalind Place

## the magic queen

the magic queen,  
her mystique and beauty  
now faded to hope,  
reaches out with grasping fingers  
to catch me  
pleading that I  
change the world  
with my youth

the magic queen  
places the blame  
on me,  
to please her,  
should I start  
the revolution tonight?

the magic queen  
cries NO!  
no revolution!  
just change it!  
if you can't do it  
you're nothing

and so  
my mother  
entreats me  
until I fade away  
into another room  
still managing  
to eat my food  
with a straight face.

Heather Tisdale

## a friendship game

Tina  
was younger than me  
but at twelve,  
she was a temptress,  
sometimes I wanted  
to hug her  
because I loved her--  
in thought

in this Grade Seven  
game of friendship,  
I played  
the village idiot  
ugly and babbling  
beside her

clumsy gestures of friendship,  
when she moved away  
I cried  
she was beautiful  
but she forgot  
and laughed at me  
no one wants  
a village idiot around

I've never seen her again,  
she wouldn't recognize me  
I'm not the village idiot,  
yet I wonder jealously  
if her light's burnt out;  
I know it's not,  
Tina will live forever  
as an enigma  
always ready for gossip  
but not revealing  
anything  
except  
marble white skin

Heather Tisdale

## the past

the past  
quiet yet behind haunted eyes  
becomes the present  
even the future  
its pain is embraced  
nursed close  
one single, shimmering gift  
which hard as a jewel  
never shatters

the nights drift  
spellbound in simple reasons  
and the days  
living someone else's dreams

in a sense searing fog  
we were lost among remembered endings  
trapped within silences  
but it is a clearing morning now  
the ghosts must be gone  
with the darkness

Rosalind Place

Rosalind Place

Rosalind Place



During the Illinois Women's Music Festival held last June, Angela and Irka spoke with one of the few musicians outside of the U.S. at the festival. Angela Arsenault is a Quebecoise singer who is a tremendously exciting performer. We are very pleased, indeed, to feature Angele on our front cover as her singing is like a 'breath of fresh air' for those of us in English Canada.

#### WOULD YOU LIKE TO TALK ABOUT WHAT THINGS ARE LIKE IN MONTREAL?

I am in Montreal and I think what's going on in Montreal is fantastic. There's no distinction between feminist art and the general art. It's being distributed well and my own songs that are feminist—I'm considered the feminist singer from Quebec—well, I have one song that says 'I'd rather stay in my kitchen', rather than sitting and listening to you guys talking about this and that. I'd rather serve your glass of gin and don't think that I'm ignorant because I'm in my kitchen. Because you're ignorant people there, out there talking about hockey and baseball and cars and who wants to hear that. I'd rather not talk at all. You know, bake my cake. That's got up to No. 1 on the hit parade in Quebec. It's incredible because I think what we're doing out there is we're not trying to separate the feminist movement from the general movement. We're getting into the whole trend, we're getting into the industry and it's working.

#### WHEN YOU SAY THE WHOLE MOVEMENT, WHAT ARE YOU SPECIFICALLY REFERRING TO?

I'm talking about women coming out and saying what they want to say in the way they want to say it. We have our own record company and say exactly what we want to say. But we're not pushing it. We're not saying I'm a lesbian, right out loud like that. We're just doing it with subtlety and humour and we're doing it with a lot of strength and a lot of work.

#### WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH THE WOMEN IN QUEBEC AND THE RELATIONSHIP TO ENGLISH CANADA?

Unfortunately, I don't think there is very much relationship going on. That's something that I'm sorry about. In Quebec, people are staying in their province. Everybody's moving along very fast in the province, I find. It's easier because, as I say, it's just one province.

#### ARE YOU PERFORMING DURING THE OLYMPICS?

Yes. I'll be performing at a huge outdoor theatre and I'll be performing on the Mount Royal and a couple of other places.

#### I THINK WE ARE REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO THE SONGBOOK COMING OUT.

Well, I don't know whether it will come out. I've got a French one but the English one is very slow. My English album was ready a year ago and it just came out this week. We are pushing the French aspect right now. The English one will come a little later but it will come.

#### IS THE ENGLISH ALBUM A TRANSLATION OF THE FRENCH ONE?

It is a translation except for three songs that are original English compositions. Some of them were originally written in English and my French ones are translations.

#### DO YOU WRITE WITH EQUAL FACILITY WITH THE TWO LANGUAGES?

I write in two languages. My first music language was English. Where I came from, we only had English radio and TV. My French music language came after. I think I'm a bit further in my English compositions but I'm getting about equal now with my French.

#### HOW MANY OTHER FRENCH WOMEN SINGERS ARE IN YOUR COMPANY?

Well, we have a record company. There are 3 women artists in it and one woman producer who is also our manager. She has the office and the secretary and she takes care of all our contracts. So that's four of us.

#### DO OTHER FRENCH SINGERS FORM A CLOSE BOND WITH YOU?

Not in business. In friendship, yes.

#### YOU ALL SUPPORT THE MOVEMENT, THEN?

Well, it is not a movement. We don't call it a movement. We have a record company and we don't even call it a feminist record company. It's a record company and we're women. Take it or leave it—that's our stuff and we're doing it. We're doing it just as well as any man. It's being distributed just as well as anybody else. And it's great because a lot of

good stuff. Our philosophy is that we do exactly what we are, and we want to sell it. But we don't take any dirty things. You know, we don't take any bribes, we don't accept anything. We just do our own thing and we try to be intelligent enough to have it put on the radio. It's slow but it's just fantastic getting there.

#### HOW ARE YOU GETTING YOUR MONEY? DO YOU HAVE ANY CANADA COUNCIL MONEY OR JUST MONEY THAT FLOWS IN FROM CONCERTS?

When we organized our record company, Jacqueline Lemay, one of the artists, said to one of her friends, you've never invested in anything before. She said, why not listen to Angele because we're going to make an album out of her but we can't make it because we don't have any money. So he came to a party one night and he listened to me and said, all right, I'll put it in. He put \$200 in the company and gave us \$2,000 loan; so I had \$3,000 to put in; Edith Butler, she had \$3,000; Lise had \$3,000; so then we

#### DO YOU KNOW APRIL AND CAROL? THEY PLAYED A CONCERT HERE THE OTHER NIGHT. THEY'RE MUSICIANS WHO HAVE A WIDE FOLLOWING IN TORONTO.

Oh, I've seen them, the other night, viola and guitar. That's beautiful music

#### DO YOU MAKE YOUR LIVING THROUGH YOUR MUSIC?

Yes, we all do, all of us now. One year ago, we didn't have a record company, we didn't have anything. We were all eating spaghetti and macaroni and now—let's say, two years ago—we didn't even have spaghetti and macaroni. We worked like hell, really, and now we have an office, we have a secretary, and in September, we'll have a promotion person who will go out and sell our production, our records. That's just fantastic. We're not out of spaghetti yet but at least we're getting enough money to pay the office and the production. The money is steadily coming in every month. That'll allow us to make some more records because that's what we want to do, to keep on going.

#### WHAT OTHER RECORDS ARE PUT OUT BY YOUR COMPANY?

There's an lp. by Jacqueline Lemay called 'Half The World Is Woman' and there's a record being done this summer by Edith Butler. Edith Butler already has 2 albums with Columbia. She cut her contract with them and came with us because she is one of the founders of our company and her album is just beautiful. It'll be out in the fall. It's in French. But Edith will probably record in English in the next year.

I WAS TALKING WITH A WOMAN FROM DIANA PRESS HERE. SHE WAS SAYING THAT WOMEN ARE CRAZY NOT TO PURCHASE EQUIPMENT. YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT \$18,000 FOR YOUR COMPANY. THAT MONEY WILL COME BACK. THE RISK IS TAKEN, BUT IT WILL COME BACK.

Yes, that's what I mean when I say that it's a long range thing. Women should put it in their heads that, from now on, they are business women. They are not trying little here and there, get a little of this and that done. This record company—it doesn't matter to us whether it brings money next year or the year after. That is something that we've put up business for our lifetime, to live on it when we are 50 or 60 years old. It's doing business together. I think it is just fantastic. I never even thought existed or could exist, that you could have a business, a real business that brings in money. It's real serious and everybody is working in it together and everybody is making money. Everybody profits from helping each other.

#### WE JUST ASKED A QUESTION ABOUT MUSIC AND POLITICS AND WHETHER ANGELE WOULD CONSIDER COMING BACK TO THIS FESTIVAL.

I've only been here two days. I've enjoyed the evening concerts immensely. I wasn't in too many workshops. Some of them just seemed to be a lot of talking. We had about 10 different topics going at one point, not getting anywhere. I missed some fantastic workshops. I'd like to come back next year and not miss them. What strikes me here is a really revolutionary thing. For instance, to see all the women kissing each other on the campus grounds and all the men walking around. To me, this is a shock. I've never seen this before. It should go on a lot more and men should do the same if they're homosexual. They should feel free to take each other's hands and go walking on the campus. The more everybody will be free.

## ANGELE



## ARSENAULT

young women singers are coming to us now and they're even more beginners than us. Some of them don't have any records out yet and they're all coming to our company. They're saying: we want to be with you because we like your philosophy, the way you're doing things. My manager gets offers every day. She gets offers from big stars to do their managing, recording and producing. She won't take anymore, she says she's got enough. She's encouraging and teaching them how to start their own, too.

#### DESCRIBE YOUR PHILOSOPHY. YOU SAY PEOPLE COME TO YOU BECAUSE THEY LIKE YOUR PHILOSOPHY.

Well, the philosophy we have is a friendship basis and we do our own compositions the way we feel like them. Our manager goes out all over the place and tells everybody that we are just the best singers in the world right now. She's always talking to everybody about us. She's not saying, specifically, this is real feminist stuff. She's saying this is

went out and my sister gave \$500; my brother gave \$600; and somebody else's brother gave \$1,000. We got together about \$18,000. We've made three albums out of it and three 45 rpm records.

#### HOW DO YOU DISTRIBUTE ACROSS CANADA?

We're not across Canada. We're just in the Quebec province. Across Canada, we are trying to get some little distributors here and there.

#### HOW DID YOU GET TO THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL?

That's a good question. Last year, Jacqueline Lemay wrote 'Half The World Is Woman'. She put an ad in a news-magazine and when a woman came to Montreal, she knocked on Jacqueline's door. She said, I want to buy that record. I just happened to drop in and started talking. I played her my French album and then she said, why don't you come up. That was that. Strange, eh? I'm really glad to be here.



# STOLEN PAGES

hating a woman means taking her seriously...sisterhood is a form of trivialization. we must not underestimate women's capacity for evil, or gloss over examples of vicious behaviour.

behind feminist ideology is a reality which is much more vital than sisterly solidarity. beyond discussion groups and the petty politics of a fragmented movement, is a vast, primeval store of jealousy, hatred, dissatisfaction, despair; an incredibly negative morass which surfaces in small or large ways, always to be suppressed or explained as the fissures are patched over and the ideology saved from defamiation.

a women's movement, or any other movement for that matter, is an amoebic creature spreading in different directions, bringing different outcomes to different people. do women ever go insane because of their involvement in the movement? a fair number seem to freak and split town.

is all the steam gone? are feminists barking up the wrong tree?

the women's movement should break up. the radical feminists should disband, women's centres other than those directly funded and operated by the government should close down. all the committed feminists should go travelling. at all costs they should stop living together, stop believing in their 'communities', stop talking about their relationships and nattering on about personal politics.

I am going to make everyone furious with me by saying all this in a public meeting--then I'll escape to northern



saskatchewan. then everybody who stayed behind could work out their hatreds, centre them on me, and get themselves slightly straightened out before my return. six months later I'd come back disguised as some completely repulsive character, a movie actress for example, and begin a campaign of subversion, inventing gossip about everyone (including myself) and influencing things from the sidelines. bit by bit I would accelerate the process of erosion, calling sacred writings into question, creating a climate of doubt and mistrust. I would slowly begin work on a new worldview, complete with maps and charts and diagrams, according to which everything said about women down through history would be proved to be right. I would begin to announce the birth of a new brand of feminism, the basic tenet of which would be the virtue of suffering and belief in an after-life. with

time the masses of women would be on my side as people begin more and more to realize that feminist solutions create more psychological and social dislocations than were ever dreamed of back in the sixties.

lesbianism is just another form of freaked-out behaviour which happens to have become sacrosanct. it is a massive and immovable sacred cow. it is sitting in the middle of the road, blocking discussion, causing a great deal of congestion and tension. no one who is not a lesbian is allowed to talk about it, on pain of being accused of being anti-gay. lesbian women may criticise heterosexual women for being co-opted, male-dominated, not committed enough, but counter-criticisms (such as that gay women are repressing a large part of their sexuality because of unresolved fears of men) are absolutely taboo. there is no real discussion of women's sexuality going on anymore in the women's movement, for fear it might actually lead somewhere and threaten the present status quo.

the women's movement should set up a national sub-committee to make fun of itself.

that's impossible of course, so the only solution is for everybody to abandon the women's movement, that huge, individuality-crunching myth, that overgrown Beast, that calcified bureaucracy, and start from scratch to get their brains back intact.

## PROGRAMMATIC MANIFESTO FOR REORGANIZING FEMINISM FROM THE GROUND UP

Basically. All women will wear white garments, no jewellery, and will ride white bicycles.

There will be a strict avoidance of consciousness-raising groups in the old sense of the term, and although historical writings and ideological books will be admitted and studied, the limitations of such works will be thoroughly grasped by all. The growth of factions based on divisions of intellectual-type thought will be avoided in favour of meditation-action as taught and practised in the community.

Emotionalism will be discouraged. Women will not be barred from discussing their feelings, but time limits will be placed on this activity.

The group's emphasis will be on celibacy, self-discipline, the cultivation of solitude, work in a chosen field combined with an equal contribution of work necessary to the functioning of the community.

Married women and women living with men will be admitted on an equal basis with other women, although special adjustments may have to be made to balance commitments shared between the community and external involvements. Similarly, lesbian women will be accepted, but no distinction is to be made (even subtly) between them and 'male-identified' women. Relationships of a sexual nature would not be discouraged, but they will be considered peripheral to the focus of the group, which would be on each woman as an individual with a particular relationship to the world.

Artistic work will be encouraged as a form of activity which enriches both community and individual.

Physical exercise will occupy an essential part of each day.

Intellectual study will be part of each woman's daily regime.

Meditation will be taught and practised.

A certain amount of time will be devoted to the collection and study of dreams, as part of a general effort to expand and deepen our understanding of women in all facets of their being.

Work in the outside community will be considered particularly important, the

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## GERT'S GOSPEL

Free to be is a catchy phrase but I prefer free to grow, it carries a bit of responsibility that I find is sometimes missing in the present context of freedom. The freedom to grow into or out of what one perceives as the static condition of being, calls for some action, some upward movement of the senses toward liking the me you are free to be. The supposition that if one were economically free, you would have somehow acquired all the necessary virtues to be extremely happy with yourself is a fable well worth destroying if the change in your circumstances has made you less vulnerable to the pain and pleasures of risking. The art of living calls for extreme risk, we are sowers and reapers the world over the seed we sow is self begetting, if the seed is positive and sown with love, the harvest seems certain, but not until we have taken the risk of sowing to the wind will we taste the magic of being free of the me that huddles inside, sowing and reaping that narrow plot that can only be called self-interest.

As a feminist I have reason to consider the value of risking, to discard that protective shell that keeps you in the collective safety of the herd is like a snake shedding its skin. You have become a brighter target for the naked heel but at the same time that stiff dry old covering that made you dull and rigid no longer impedes your escape. No longer afraid to be vulnerable in your own private life, you now melt into a general vulnerability that is protective in its sharing. The me that I want to be free to be is idealistic, it believes, it keeps the faith, the lessons of history demand the commitment of today to perfect the visions of tomorrow. My sex has gambled since the world began, a penny's worth of faith for an inch of desire but not until we risk it all and sow to the wind will we be free to be what we were meant to be from the beginning.

—Reprinted from *The Northern Woman*



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'political' component of this community of women. It might take the form of research, provision of necessary services, community organizing, or work in institutions like food cooperatives, garden projects, child care, etc. Values emphasized will be non-bureaucracy, openness to the realities of different kinds of people, and particularly an interest in activating and working with the energies of women at the level of the neighbourhood.

your friend  
hari matta



# I'M NOT MAD!



**WOMEN LOOK AT PSYCHIATRY**  
D.E. Smith, S.J. David, Editors  
\$4.00, 208 pages  
Press Gang Publishers  
821 East Hastings  
Vancouver

sweeping away the old myths, creating a few new ones, this anthology straddles the vastly differing experiences of ex-mental patients, feminist theorists, and 'feminist' therapists. It attempts to offer a feminist analysis of the psychiatric oppression of women and does lay the groundwork for such from both personal and intellectual approaches.

and there's something for everyone (since the editors did not enforce editorial consistency)...for the naive and starchy-eyed, the shocking (often literally ECT treatment) accounts of those unfortunate enough to get locked away in the mental prisons, for those newly involved in the movement, we find a selection of the basic why's and wherefore's of the problem. and for those interested, several stabs at delineating a feminist therapy approach. one brave soul even believes that 'feminist therapy, women reaffirming women, crosses class barriers' (p. 193); oh shades of sisterhood...

there are two articles on which i have chosen to focus, the first being 'Women's Oppression and Psychiatric Oppression' by judi chamberlain, a full-time mental patients' liberation activist. the piece begins with a statement concerning the two approaches to analysing the psychiatric monster: a feminist perspective and a mental patients' liberation (MPL) one, the latter being more progressive. (the reader should bear in mind that this particular article is dated by the latest explosion of the MPL movement into the mainstream of public consciousness; the argument put forth is still quite valid and well-formed.)

chamberlain's main thesis that 'all people must recognize the privileges which the trappings of sanity bring, and struggle to overcome these tendencies in ourselves' (p. 41). until recently, the anti-psychiatric writers, the 'radical' therapists, and the feminists have continued to foster the belief that others need to speak for the mental patients and have centred mainly on the needs-experiences of the middle class client. 'feminists especially should appreciate that the best analysis of oppression is made by those who have been oppressed' (p. 41). the majority of the victims of the large public institutions (the Ontario hospitals, the psych wards) are those members of the working classes who rebel against the non-choices offered them by this society; the majority of the agitators for psychiatric reform are those people who have seldom—if ever—been inside a public institution, let alone been incarcerated in one. not only does the writer quite ably slap the wrists of women's movement do-gooders, she points out that with the aid of the com-

munity mental health movement the scope and power of psychiatry is rapidly on the increase. it is fairly easy to brush away the overt sexist tones within psychiatric practice, any liberal wishy-wash will show you how; it is quite another struggle to understand (and transform) the vast tracking and punishment aspects of the patriarchal head science. big daddy still brutalizes and breaks those who don't toe the line, no matter how liberated the terms he uses, no matter how trendy the therapeutic form

in 'Women, Sex Role Stereotypes, and Mental Health: Catch 22', meredith kimball (phd in psychology and into



women's studies at UBC) rehearses the crushing oppression of sex role stereotyping and the delineation of mental health. we are offered a variety of studies to prove that the former really does still exist and then are asked to consider how the latter by inferring either adjustment or self-actualization runs into conflict with a sexist mythology. 'self-actualization may mean lack of adjustment, pain and confusion in defining and living different roles, and the risk of social disapproval for one's actions' (p. 127).

## IN TUNE WITH THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

**Ruth Dworin**

**ALL OUR LIVES-A Women's Songbook**  
edited by Cheney, Delhi, Silverstein  
Diana Press, Baltimore, Maryland 1976  
200 pp. \$6.50

*All Our Lives-A Woman's Songbook* is the book I've been waiting for all my life. After years of searching for little-known records, trading tapes with my sisters, collecting feminist songs in mimeographed song books, or reading some man's idea of what 'women's music' is all about, suddenly it all appears under one cover—a beautifully produced feminist songbook.

*All Our Lives* provides an excellent synthesis of political and cultural feminism. In a twelve-page introduction to the book, the editors give a history of women's music, a history of feminist music, and a political analysis of the importance of women's culture and the role of music in this culture. "If nothing seems amiss, there is no wish for change. If someone else defines you, you cannot hope to attain the self-consciousness necessary for liberation...Women's culture is at (a) breaking point. We are just now able to comprehend that songs express a point of view that is not our own. The silence of alternative images kept us in the roles which we did hear about. But with the growth of a self-conscious sexual politics, in addition to the class-conscious politics provided by the Old Left, the latest women's movement brought out protest in the cultural as well as the economic sphere. We want to create a women's culture."

**Margaret Murray**

the second section of this paper shines with an excellent exploration of the role of wife and mother in the 70's. as we all know, the status left to women as mothers is high in the heavenly point system and the pits as far as tangible support from the present capitalist structure. we get to follow our instincts rather than be trained as are workers in all other professions since to be a normal female person is to have/raise children (this denies the continual training from birth for our god-given role). 'the women's movement, in its attempt to counter the myth of motherhood, has done so largely by putting it down. thus having children is viewed within some parts of the movement as unimportant: raising children should not get in the way of the really important activities of political and economic work...a whole new set of myths and should have been generated to support women who choose not to have children but only at the expense of those who do have children' (p. 130).

large tinges of fritz perls's 'you do your thing and i'll do mine, and we'll both have a good time' philosophy are reflected in the final summation. it ends by rather weakly stating that good therapy is of an individual nature and seems to ignore the class bias of any type of psychiatric therapy. the whole power dynamic is lightly glossed over by the choice (?) of a non-authoritarian atmosphere by the client.

basically the book is a beginning, somewhat dated by the ever continuing struggle of women. it gathers together factual information and experiential reports in a well-balanced and easy flowing fashion; it is an eye-opening source book for those new at the game. and as press gang's first major publication it is a success...a small note. the book is poorly bound, the glue leaving something to be desired (like its function). I found that by the time i had read the book in its entirety, the book and its jacket had gone their separate ways.



And the songs are wonderful! There are feminist classics like "Ode to a Gym Teacher", "I'm Tired of Fuckers Fucking Over Me", and "The Bloods"; songs about women working, women striking, women changing, women loving women. There's a short introduction to each section, and each song includes descriptive notes and biographical information about the songwriter. The first part of the book contains recently-written material. The second contains traditional songs and ballads. In many cases, the editors chose one example of

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a particular genre (songs about mothers, murders, witchcraft, betraying lovers) and preceded these songs with an analysis of women in these positions historically.

At the back of the book is a list of other songs in each category, and a comprehensive resource list of books, records, magazines, and song books containing feminist material. There are also nice personal notes from the women who edited *All Our Lives*, and a financial breakdown showing the book's budget balanced with projected sales receipts.

The other item at the back of the book, which impresses me as an example of the editors' political commitment, was a letter from the editors to Random House books declining Random's offer to publish/distribute *All Our Lives* and explaining the political implications of choosing to publish with Diana, a small feminist press. This choice will make the book a bit more difficult, perhaps, for the reader to locate (Diana's distribution system not being as extensive as Random's) but the extra effort is well worth it. You can order it direct from Diana Press, 12 W. 25th St., Baltimore, Maryland, 21218, U.S.A.

The book is beautifully laid out, the calligraphy on the music staves clear and readable. My one criticism of *All Our Lives* is that the photographs, while consistently excellent in subject matter and composition, are occasionally blurry or too dark. But this is a small flaw in an otherwise beautiful book.



# HOUSEWORK LETTERS

## from bolton

In response to your article concerning the Wages for Housework presence at the Feminist Weekend in Bolton, I would like to point out that only five women from the Wages for Housework Committee attended, not eight as you have stated.

Meg Thornton, Nancy Johnson and myself were supportive of Wages for Housework during the discussions, but we were not members of the Committee. That you would assume that any person supporting Wages for Housework is a 'party member' adhering to a 'party line' seems to preclude the possibility of individual thought and speech, and implies, that no one can discover where their own interests lie by looking at their personal experience in a political way. It also suggests a certain bias in your editorializing.

Many, many women are supportive of the Wages for Housework campaign. Some are on the Committee, but many others are not. It has nothing whatsoever to do with 'party discipline', it has only to do with women's realization of our tremendous potential power if all women organize together to demand back our money and refuse our work. It is this wageless work which underlies our oppression as women, since it is this work which sets up our relation to The Man. Even if we are lesbians, living in a 'feminist community', we can't avoid dealing with The Man on his terms whenever we have dealings with the state, the job, or the street.

The Saturday afternoon discussion of the 'institution of heterosexuality' would have been ludicrous had it not turned to Wages for Housework. We can't possibly destroy our oppression as individuals, oppression and exploitation of women form the very basis of our society. We must attack it at its roots, and this means building the power of all women by organizing together. The potential power is there, it is up to us to get together in

our struggle and make this power a reality.

Anne Quigley  
Toronto

*Collective Note: You are correct, Anne. There was an assumption made on the number of Committee members present. The validity of this lies in the fact that you, Meg and Nancy were not simply supporting the Committee, but using the same rhetoric and emotional undertone as were they. Of course, our editorial was biased; editorials are reserved for that purpose. Yes, the Heterosexuality Workshop needed input from the housework perspective but it would have gone a lot further without the argumentative position of the Committee.*

## kingston critical

We are very lucky here in Kingston that the problem of lesbians within the women's movement has never really come up. There is of course an easy explanation; there are only ten lesbians that have come out in Kingston and maybe three or four that are active in their struggle. Most of these lesbians were part of the Lesbian Rap group (which doesn't exist anymore) and there seems to have been no friction. Because lesbians in Kingston are so few, I think that it was a good idea for them to set up the Queen's Homophile Association with the men (who are also few in numbers). These women have also ensured that their demands as women's liberationists will be met. They have kept in touch with the Centre and I hope that they will continue to do so and even more.

This problem of fragmentation within the movement really hit me even more when we had the Wages for Housework Committee from Toronto down for a day. The Other Woman's editorial in the last issue also answered a lot of questions in my mind. Most of us at the Centre are not in favour of Wages for Housework, we believe that as a political strategy it will

not get us anywhere if not in fact taking us a few steps backward. But we were genuinely interested in finding out about the Committee's position. We all felt very much on the defensive as soon as they started speaking and felt continuously obliged to defend the women's movement which they attacked all the time (the same way they did at the Kingston Lesbian Conference). They claim that the women's movement is too broad and that it has turned off a lot of women. Yes, it's true but only a broad movement that embraces every aspect of women's life, that questions the structures of this society will ever achieve anything. Look at what happened with the suffragette movement: as soon as they won the vote, they were lost. It is easy to attack a group like Wages for Housework because they fail to put their struggle within a larger and more important movement, a movement that will free women from housework, a movement that will free men and women from alienated work. Your editorial reveals the structures and organization for the TWFWHC: I am not surprised. I now feel that not only are they victims of the media's and the government's attacks against the women's movement but that they are also upholding the structures and processes of capitalism. I believe that one of the greatest contributions of the women's movement is C-R, a concern for individuals but most of all a concern for process and methods of communication. We have to fight against the set of relationships imposed by capitalist structures and relearn a whole new way of relating, of communicating. Any woman's group should be very conscious of this and 'structure' itself in order to allow free expression and it should be flexible to respond to the needs of the people involved instead of the other way around.

Anyway this is just to celebrate sisterhood which is sadly losing its impetus.

Sophie Blessonnette  
Kingston

help with a substantial part of the housework. These social features, coupled with a passive tradition, make women here less than likely to have time for women's groups or demonstrations. No wonder the male-dominated Supreme Court felt no compunction in wiping out the abortion reform!

The movement has also failed to push its way into female consciousness because of internal structural weakness. There is no one leading figure identified with it. True enough some activists stand out, such as Alice Schwarzer, a journalist and author, who learned her feminism from Simone de Beauvoir. But she and those like her have in no way attracted the media attention that feminist leaders have in the United States. Although Alice Schwarzer maintains that an anti-authoritarian, diffuse, grass-rooted movement is better than one that is centralized around one personality, a powerful spokeswoman or a few well-placed representatives would be more effective than what presently exists. In addition, no female author here has written an analysis of the West German situation that has enjoyed any widespread popularity. All of the books, and several do exist, remain in the hands of relatively few. Ironically, Esther Vilar's book is the only best-seller written by a German woman on the emancipation issue. Dr. Vilar, however, considers women as the sum total of two breasts, one vagina, and a few stereotypical behavioural patterns. Her book has certainly done nothing to help the cause of women's rights! Another failure of the movement has been its inability to define acceptable goals. Because it is comprised of so many different persuasions, and because of the German tendency to refrain from practical coalitionary poli-

*Collective Note: We appreciate your long response to our pullout on abortion, birth control and sterilization. You raise some valid points but some, we think, could be disputed. The 'Horror Story' article about birth control is a personal account and does not happen to everyone. But neither is it unique and, for those women who are isolated from others, it is important for them to know that they are not alone.*

—continued from page 8

## FEMINISM

cleaning their husbands' shoes that they don't have time to ally themselves with the growing number of feminists here.

Traditionally bound to the home, German women remain there today because of social institutions that exist beyond their individual control or even influence. Since West Germany is one of the European countries spending the least part of its budget on education, only 1 out of 3 pre-school children finds a place in a kindergarten, and school-age children remain in their classrooms only until one pm. No wonder only 15 per cent of all women with children under 14 work and the rest are too busy caring for their children and inventing afternoon activities for them to actively participate in the women's movement. That stores remain open weekdays only until 6:00 and Saturdays until 1:00 further contributes to the lack of time women could devote to female issues. Working women who might be expected to be most interested in a movement to improve their status tend to be too overburdened because, as estimated by Brigitte, Germany's Ladies' Home Journal, only one-third of their husbands



**VOLUNTEERS:** Counselors for a telephone help and information line for homosexuals and lesbians. Toronto Area Gays, P.O. Box 6708, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, M5W 1X5. 416-964-6600.

**LESBIAN WOMEN:** Communications and Contacts. Discreet introductions between sisters. Write The League, Box 2143, Darien, Ct. 06820.

## A CELEBRATION OF THE BEGUINES

*'The Beguines were a group of medieval wimmin who achieved social, spiritual and economic independence by establishing a self-sufficient women-only community which lasted for a half a dozen generations'. On October 30-31, Phazes of the Moon in conjunction with several women's organizations from Richmond College, is sponsoring A Celebration reclaiming All Hollows Eve as the Woman's Traditional New Year. Workshops will be held at Richmond College on Staten Island, New York, Sat. between 10 am-6 pm and Sun. between 11 am-6 pm. There will be a Wimmin's Concert, featuring Zenobia, Willie Tyson and Medusa Music, followed by a Wimmin's Masked Ball in Manhattan Universalist Church (76th St. and Central Park West). The Concert is at 7.30 pm Sat., the Ball at 10.30 -2.00 am.*

Workshops include The Politics of Spirituality, Collectivity, Mental Institutions: The Continued Torture of Deviant Women, Lesbian Repression and the Prison System as well as many other workshops on parapsychology, astrology healing and the female aesthetic. The deadline for registration for housing and childcare is October 8th. Late registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis on Saturday. Enclose \$5 for all workshops, \$5 for the concert and masked ball, or \$9 for all workshops, concert and masked ball. Send your money order or cheque to: Phazes of the Moon, St. George Station, Staten Island, N.Y. 10301.

tics when ideological differences exist, no satisfactory programmes have emerged. Not many will unite behind socialist-feminist goals, fewer want to march to a tune including a stanza in praise of lesbianism, and the limited number who support Alice Schwarzer's apolitical demand for a society where sex plays no role are simply invisible in this society.

All of these factors have prevented the female movement here from having a decisive impact on the society. And the movement's failure explains, in part, the Court's willingness to reject the right to abortion, a right so fundamental to women. Until the movement successfully reaches more women and offers them acceptable options, alternatives, and methods of change West Germany will remain much as it is today, a patriarchal society. Helga Pross has explained that Germany lacks a movement today because the women's situation is so much better than it was formerly. If that's so, let us hope German women do not remain satisfied with so little only because their lot was so much worse. There are conditions here for a fundamental questioning of a sexist society. What has so far been missing is a movement able to bring a traditionally passive group to its feet.

—continued from page 15

## DOCTOR

forceps. This woman had already had quite a big baby through that pelvis. It is nice to hear that Dwyer had a spontaneous delivery of her baby. However, it would not be a service to our sisters to encourage them to get into situations which are well known to be risky.

I confidently expect that some day at a home birth I will be surprised by unexpected twins, the second presenting by the arm, say, or the face. I will know what to do, of course, and I hope that all home midwives are equally well informed.

Finally, I can't say I think much of such phrases as 'the slam-bam-thank-you-ma'am attitudes of doctors' and 'doctors have two favourite methods of dealing with women's complaints: they either prescribe tranquilizers or tell you that you're hysterical or both'. People who write such things are speaking from their own experiences as speaking from their own experiences so I don't take it personally but they should lift their eyes from their old diaries and see the crowds of feminist female doctors all around them. Over 50 per cent of the McMaster medical school is now female.

Incidentally, there is an irreducible minority of patients for whom hysteria is the correct diagnosis and tranquilizers the correct therapy. But basically the problem is the same thing Dworin describes so well: women have a vague, passive fear of technicians, especially doctors and are incapable of simply sitting there in that chair until they get a straight answer. There's nothing magic about getting answers from technicians, sexist doctors won't volunteer anything but we can make them tell. Try it.



# spreading across the land

N.B. If you would like to be listed,  
please send us your address.

\*has a newsletter



## EAST

**WOMEN'S CENTRE\*\***  
P.O. Box 6072  
77 Bond St.  
St. John's, NFLD  
753-0220

**WOMEN'S CENTRE \***  
P.O. Box 5052  
5673 Brenton Place  
Armdale, N.S.  
423-0643

**WOMEN'S CENTRE \***  
64 University Ave.  
Charlottetown, P.E.I.

**WOMEN'S CENTRE \***  
28 Saunders St.  
Fredericton, N.B.  
454-1848

**LES FAM \***  
80 Rue Church  
Moncton, N.B.  
854-3095

## QUEBEC

**WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
YWCA  
1355 Dorchester St. W.  
Montreal, Quebec  
(514) 866-9941-44

**NEW WOMAN CENTRE**  
3465 Cote des Neiges  
Room 71  
Montreal, Quebec  
931-3807

**WOMEN'S INFO AND  
REFERRAL CENTRE**  
3595 St. Urbain  
Montreal, Quebec  
514-842-4781

**POWERHOUSE GALLERY\***  
3738 St. Dominique  
Montreal, Quebec  
514-844-4101  
(Only all women's art gallery)

## ONTARIO

**WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
200 Montreal St.  
Kingston, Ontario  
542-5226

**WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
72 Centre St. N.  
Oshawa, Ont.  
725-2363

**WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT  
CENTRE**  
15 Birch Ave.  
Toronto, Ont.  
925-1154

**TORONTO WOMEN'S BOOK-  
STORE**  
85 Harbord St.  
Toronto, Ont.  
922-8744

**WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
65 Main Street North  
Brampton, Ont.  
453-3243

**WOMEN'S RESOURCE  
CENTRE \***  
56 Queen St., Box 310  
St. Catharines, Ont.

**WOMEN'S PLACE**  
42B King St. S.  
Waterloo, Ont.  
886-1620

**WOMEN'S RESOURCE  
CENTRE \***  
322 Queens Ave.  
London, Ont.  
519-432-8693

**WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
YWCA  
476 Peel St.  
Woodstock, Ont.

**WOMEN'S PLACE \***  
709 Ouellette, Room 8  
Windsor, Ont.  
252-0244

**NATIVE AND CULTURAL  
WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
1696 Cadillac  
Windsor, Ont.  
944-3557

**WOMEN'S CENTRE \***  
197 N. Christina St.  
Sarnia, Ont.  
337-9642

**WOMEN'S CENTRE \***  
821 Somerset St. W.  
Ottawa, Ontario

**WOMEN'S CENTRE \***  
Cambrian College  
Barrydowne Road  
Sudbury, Ontario

**WOMEN'S CENTRE \***  
5 Charles St. W.  
North Bay, Ont.

**WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE**  
27 Cedar St. N.  
Timmins, Ont.  
705-267-5417

**NORTHERN WOMEN'S  
CENTRE**  
120 W. Amelia St.  
(rear)  
Thunder Bay, Ont.  
622-3989

## WEST

**A WOMAN'S PLACE\***  
143 Walnut St.  
Winnipeg, Man.  
204-786-4581

**WOMEN'S INFO CENTRE\***  
148-11th St.  
Brandon, Man.  
727-5014

**NATIVE WOMEN'S  
COMMUNITY CENTRE \***  
1770 Quebec St.  
Regina, Sask.  
532-2621

**WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
7 -1843 Broad St.  
Regina, Sask.  
306-522-2777

**NATIVE WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
Box 1362  
Meadow Lake, Sask.  
236-6445

**WOMEN'S DIRECTORATE**  
Memorial Union Bldg.  
University of Saskatoon  
Saskatoon, Sask.

**NATIVE WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
1108 Central Ave.  
Prince Albert, Sask.  
764-5267

**WOMEN'S PLACE \***  
1120 7th Ave. S.  
Lethbridge, Alta.  
327-6917

**WOMEN'S PLACE**  
1114 6 Ave. S.W.  
Calgary, Alberta  
265-4930

**WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
YWCA  
320 5th Ave. S.E.  
Calgary, Alta.  
263-1550

**WOMEN'S PLACE \***  
9917 - 116 St.  
Edmonton, Alberta  
482-5808

**WOMEN'S CENTRE \***  
9904 100 St.  
Grand Prairie, Alta.  
532-8345

**WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
YWCA  
Box 5564  
Fort McMurray, Alta.  
743-4950

## OVER THE ROCKIES

**WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
490 Baker St.  
Nelson, B.C.

**WOMEN'S CENTRE AND  
BOOKSTORE**  
804 Richards St.  
Vancouver, B.C.  
684-0523

**STATUS OF WOMEN**  
2029 W.4th  
Vancouver, B.C.

**FULL CIRCLE COFFEEHOUSE**  
3070 Commercial St.,  
Vancouver, B.C.  
Friday nights

**PRESS GANG**  
821 E. Hastings St.  
Vancouver, B.C.  
(feminist printers)

**EVERYWOMAN'S BOOKS**  
2033 Oak Bay Ave.  
Victoria, B.C.

**WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
302 Steele St.  
Whitehorse, Y.T.  
403-667-2693

## Periodicals

**ATLANTIS: A WOMEN'S  
STUDIES JOURNAL**  
Donna E. Smyth  
Coordinating Editor  
c/o English Dept.  
Acadia University  
Wolfville, N.S.

**LONG TIME COMING**  
(Lesbian Feminist)  
Box 128, Stn. G  
Montreal, Quebec  
\$5 per year  
\$10.00 for institution  
50 cents sample

**FEMINIST COMMUNICATION  
COLLECTIVE**  
P.O. Box 1238  
Place D'Armes  
Montreal, Quebec  
\$4 per year  
\$5 for institutions

**Les Têtes de Pioches**  
c.p. 247  
Succursale ahuntsic  
Montréal  
\$4.00 per year

**UPSTREAM**  
1 - 121 Cambridge St. N.  
Ottawa, Ont.  
234-1075

**TIGHTWIRE (Women's Peniten-  
tiary)**  
Box 515  
Kingston, Ont.  
\$2 per year

**STATUS OF WOMEN NEWS**  
121 Avenue Road  
Toronto, Ontario  
922-3246

**THE OTHER WOMAN**  
P.O. Box 928, Stn. Q  
Toronto, Ont.  
\$4 per year

**CLEARINGHOUSE FOR  
FEMINIST MEDIA**  
365 Albert St., Apt. 4  
Waterloo, Ont.

**CANADIAN NEWSLETTER OF  
RESEARCH ON WOMEN**  
c/o Margrit Eichler  
Dept. of Sociology in  
Education  
O.I.S.E.  
252 Bloor St. W.  
Toronto, Ont.

**THE WITCH AND THE  
CHAMELEON**  
c/o Amanda Bankier  
Apt. 6  
2 Paisley Ave. S.  
Hamilton, Ont.  
\$3 per year  
(Feminist science fiction)

**THE NORTHERN WOMAN**  
316 Bay St.  
Thunder Bay, Ont.  
\$3 per year

**EMERGENCY LIBRARIAN**  
c/o Barbara Clubb  
697 Wellington Cres.  
Winnipeg, Man.

**CALGARY WOMEN'S NEWS-  
PAPER**  
223 - 12th Ave. S.W., No. 206  
Calgary, Alberta  
\$4 per year

**BRANCHING OUT**  
Box 4098  
Edmonton, Alta.

**NOTE:** There are many more women's  
centres across the country. We cannot  
list them all. For further information,  
you might try the Women's Programme,  
Sec. of State in Ottawa as they have put  
out a Directory of Women's Groups in  
Canada in French and English.

Also for complete B.C. listings, con-  
tact: Western Canadian News Service  
2029 West Fourth Ave.  
Vancouver, B.C.  
736-3746

**IMAGES**  
P.O. Box 1200  
Castlegar, B.C.  
\$3 per year

**MAKARA**  
(Pacific Women's Graphic Arts  
Coop)  
1011 Commercial Dr.  
Vancouver, B.C.  
\$6.00 per year

**KINESIS**  
(Vancouver Status of Women)  
2029 W. Fourth Ave.  
Vancouver, B.C.

**WICCA**  
(Health Collective Newsletter)  
1520 W. 6th Ave.  
Vancouver, B.C.  
\$3 per year  
25 cents sample copy

**ROOM OF ONE'S OWN**  
1818 Waterloo St.  
Vancouver, B.C.  
(literary quarterly)

## Lesbian Contacts

**HALIFAX WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
Lesbian Drop-In  
423-0643

**MONTREAL LESBIAN  
ORGANIZATION**  
3595 St. Urbain  
Montreal, Quebec  
Thurs. 8 pm.

**OTTAWA WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
Lesbian Drop-In  
Fri. 8 p.m.

**CHAT**  
201 Church St.  
Thurs. 8 p.m.  
862-1544  
Toronto, Ont.

**LESBIAN DROP-IN**  
York University  
Women's Centre  
2nd Floor  
Atkinson College  
Mon. afternoons  
12 pm-4:30 pm  
667-3509

**GAY COMMUNITY CENTRE**  
310 20th St. E.  
Saskatoon, Sask.

**LESBIAN DROP-IN**  
338 - 14 Ave. S.E.  
Calgary, Alberta  
Wed. 8 pm.

**LESBIAN-DROP-IN**  
2029 W. 4th  
Vancouver, B.C.

**VICTORIA WOMEN'S  
CENTRE**  
Lesbian Drop-In  
Alternate Fridays  
Contact Lynn